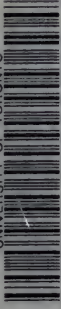


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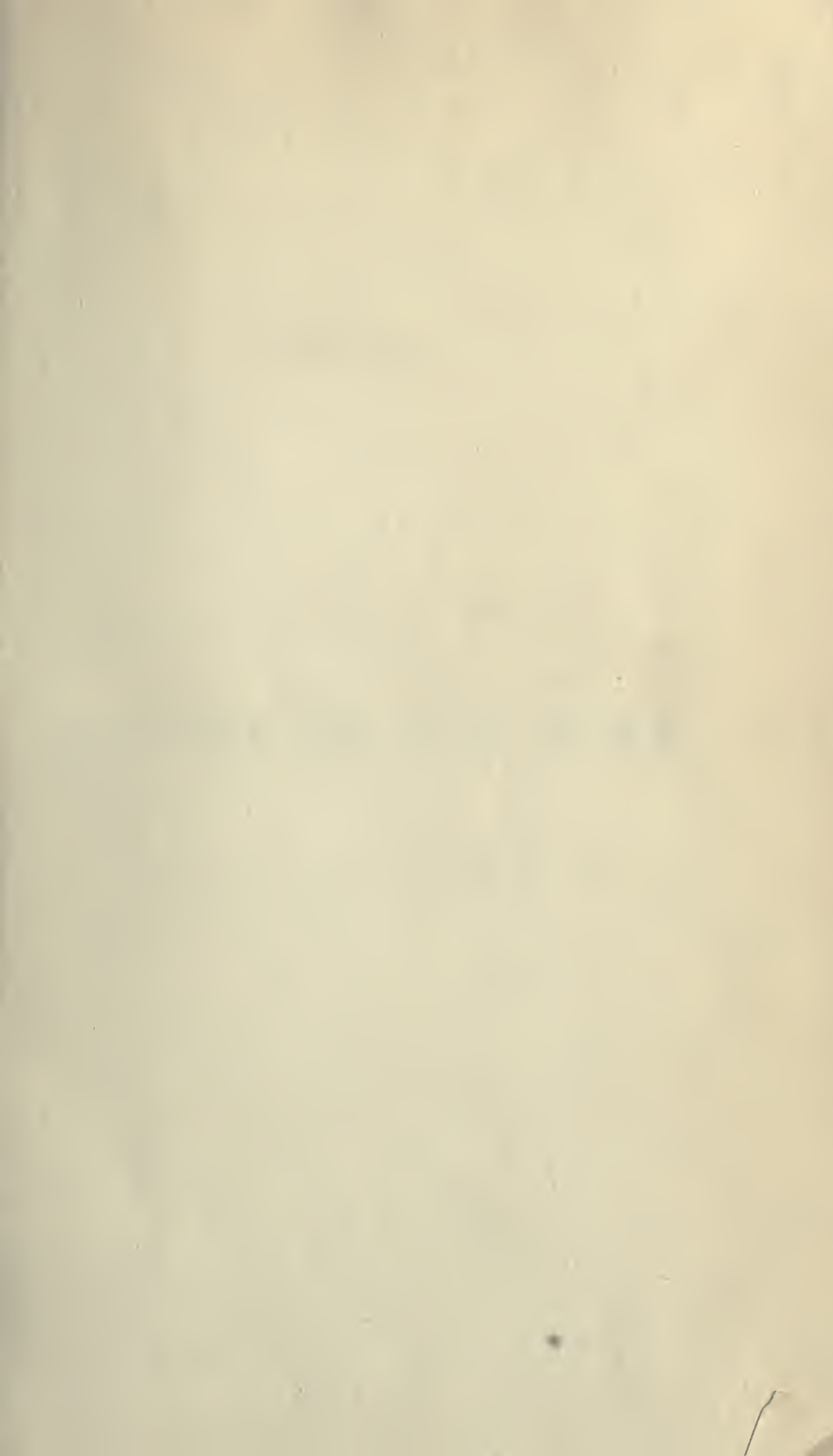
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HISTORY OF THE JEWS.





HISTORY OF THE JEWS,  
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO  
THE PRESENT DAY.

BY

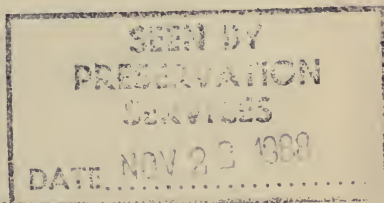
PROFESSOR H. GRAETZ.

*Specially Revised for this English Edition by the Author.*

EDITED AND IN PART TRANSLATED BY

BELLA LÖWY.

VOL. V.



*WITH A RETROSPECT,*

*AND A COMPLETE INDEX TO THE FIVE VOLUMES.*

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THE sudden death of the distinguished Author of this History having occurred on September 7th, 1891, while this volume was passing through the press, it has been thought that it would be of interest to the readers of the work to possess his portrait. One of the last literary labours of Professor GRAETZ consisted in the finishing touches which, within a few days of his lamented end, he gave to this History.

# HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### CHMIELNICKI AND THE PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS OF POLAND BY THE COSSACKS.

Condition of the Jews in Poland before the outbreak of Persecution—Influence of the Jesuits—Characteristics of Poles and Jews—The Home of the Cossacks—Repression of the Cossacks by the Government—Jews appointed as Tax-farmers—Jurisdiction of the Synods—The Study of the Talmud in Poland—Hebrew Literature in that Country becomes entirely Rabbinical—Character of Polish Judaism—The Jews and the Cossacks—Chmielnicki—Sufferings of the Jews in consequence of his Successes—The Tartar Haidamaks—Fearful Massacres in Nemirov, Tulczyn, and Homel—The Prince Vishniowiecki—Massacres at Palonnoie, Lemberg, Narol, and in other Towns—John Casimir—Lipmann Heller and Sabbataï Cohen—Renewal of the War between the Cossacks and Poles—The Russians join the Cossacks in attacking the Jews—Charles X. of Sweden—The Polish Fugitives—“Polonisation” of Judaism.

1648—1656.

POLAND had ceased to be the haven of freedom for the sons of Judah when the short-sighted kings summoned the Jesuits to supervise the training of the young nobles and clergy, and to crush the spirit of the Polish dissidents. These originators of disunion, to whom the frequent partition of Poland must be attributed, also sought to undermine the unobtrusive power which the Jews exercised over the noble population through their money and prudence, and combined with their common foes, the German workmen and tradespeople, in



order to restrict and oppress them. After that time there were repeated persecutions of Jews in Poland; sometimes the German members of guilds, sometimes the pupils of the Jesuits, raised a hue and cry against them. In the calamities of the Thirty Years' War, fugitive Jews sought Poland. The canonical laws were not applied here with strictness. The high nobility continued even at this time to be dependent on the Jews, who in some measure counterbalanced the national defects. To the Polish flightiness, levity, unsteadiness, extravagance in expenditure, and recklessness, the Jewish prudence, skill, economy, and care stood in good stead. The Jew was to the Polish nobleman more than his financier; he was his help in embarrassment, his prudent adviser, his all in all. Especially did the nobility make use of the Jews in developing their recently established colonies, for which they had neither the necessary perseverance nor capacity. Colonies had gradually been formed on the lower Dnieper and the north shore of the Black Sea, peopled by runaway Polish slaves, criminals, adventurers from many nations, peasants and nobles, who felt themselves cramped and endangered in their homes. These outcasts formed the original root of the Cossack race at the waterfalls of the Dnieper (Za-Porogi), whence the Cossacks obtained the name of Zaporogians. In order to maintain themselves, they took to plundering and robbing the neighbouring Tartars. They became warlike and hardened, and with every success their courage and independent spirit increased.

The kings, who needed the Cossacks in military undertakings for warding off the inroads of Tartars and Turks, granted them a certain independence in the Ukraine and Little Russia, and appointed over them a head man from their own midst, an Attaman or Hetman, with special marks of dignity.



But the bigoted temper of King Sigismund III. and the Jesuits caused the Cossacks, who might have been an element of strength for the Poles, to become an endless source of discontent and rebellion. The Zaporogians were for the most part adherents of the Greek Church, as the Greek Catholic confession was generally predominant in South Poland. After the Popes had thus weakened and oppressed the Polish dissidents, they laboured either to unite the Greek Catholics with the Romish Church or to extirpate them. But with the warlike spirit of the Cossacks this change was not so easy, hence a regular system was employed against them. Three noble houses especially had control of the colonisation in the Ukraine and Little Russia, those of Koniecpolski, Vishniowiecki, and Potocki, and they transferred to their Jewish business agents the lease of the oppressive imposts falling on the Cossacks. Thus Jewish communities gradually spread in the Ukraine and Little Russia, and even beyond. The Cossacks were, for instance, bound to pay a tax on every new-born child and every married pair. In order that there might be no evasion, the Jewish lessees had the keys of the Greek churches, and as often as the clergyman wished to perform a baptism or marriage, he was obliged to ask them for the key. In general the position of the Jews in the country districts, where none but Poles dwelt, was better than in the larger cities of Posen, Cracow, Lublin and Lemberg, which besides their Polish inhabitants contained a German population.

By means of their great number, their importance and their compact union, the Jews in Poland formed in a peculiar sense a state within a state. The general synod, which assembled twice a year at Lublin and Jaroslaw, formed a legislative and judicial parliament from which there was no higher appeal. At first called the Synod of the Three Countries, it was transformed in the first

quarter of the seventeenth century into the Synod of the Four Countries (Vaad Arba Arazot). An elective president (Parnes di Arba Arazot) was at the head, and conducted public affairs. The communities and Rabbis had civil, and, also, to a certain extent, criminal jurisdiction, at least against informers and traitors. Hence no Jew ventured to bring an accusation against one of his race before the authorities of the country, in order to avoid exposing himself to disgrace and contempt from public opinion, which would have embittered his life or even entailed death. Almost every community had its college of judges, a Rabbi with two assessors, before whom every complaint was brought, but the final decision rested with the synod. The synod also occupied itself with securing uprightness in dealing and conduct, and honesty in weight and measure, as far as concerned Jews.

The study of the Talmud in Poland, which had been first established by three men, Shachna, Solomon Lurya and Moses Isserles, reached a pitch never previously attained at any time or in any country. The demand for copies of the Talmud was so great that in scarcely twenty years three editions had to be printed, no doubt in thousands of copies. The study of the Talmud was certainly a greater necessity in Poland than in the rest of Europe. The Rabbis, as has been already said, had jurisdiction of their own, and decided according to Talmudical and Rabbinical laws. The great number of Jews in Poland, and their fondness for litigation, gave occasion to intricate law cases. The Rabbinical judges were obliged to go back to the source of law, the Talmud, to seek points of support for such cases. The contending parties being sufficiently informed and acute to verify quotations and comparisons, the Rabbis had to secure themselves from being most severely criticised. Hence Rabbinical civil law in Poland met with quite extra-

ordinary cultivation and extension, for it had to become adapted to all cases and accessible to all parties. Thus the ever-growing subtlety of the method of Talmudical study depended on current conditions and wants, and the circumstance that each wished to surpass all others in hair-splitting must also be taken into account.

It would be tedious to enumerate the Rabbinical Polish authors in the first half of the seventeenth century. The cultivation of the single faculty of minute ingenuity at the cost of the rest, narrowed the imagination, and hence, in Poland, not a single literary performance was produced which could bear the name of poetry. All the mental productions of the Polish school bore the Talmudical stamp, as the school regarded everything from the Talmudical point of view. The disciples of this school looked down almost with contempt on Scripture and its simple grandeur, or rather it was for them almost non-existent. Whence could they get the time to occupy themselves with it? And what could they do with these children's stories, which did not admit the application of intellectual subtlety? They certainly knew something of the Bible from the extracts which were read in the synagogues, and from those which the Talmud occasionally quoted. The faculty for appreciating the simple and elevated greatness of biblical doctrines and characters, as well as for simplicity and elevation in general, was, however, denied them. A love of twisting, distorting and ingenuity, and a foregone antipathy to what did not lie within their field of vision constituted the fundamental character of the Polish Jews. Pride in their own knowledge of the Talmud, and a spirit of dogmatism, attached even to the best Rabbis, and undermined their moral sense. The Polish Jews of course were extraordinarily pious, but even this piety was founded



on sophistry and boastfulness. Each wished to surpass the other in knowing better what the Code prescribed for one case or another. Thus religion sank, not merely, as among the Jews of other countries, to a mechanical unintelligent course of conduct, but to a subtle art of interpretation. To know better was everything for them; but to act according to acknowledged principles of religious purity, and to apply them to a moral life, occurred to but few. Integrity and right-mindedness were as much out of their way as simplicity and sense of truth. Obstinacy was combined with this artificial method of the schools, and was employed to outwit the less cunning. They found a pleasure and a sort of triumphant delight in deception and cheating. Against members of their own race cunning could not well be employed, because they too were sharp-witted; but the non-Jewish world with whom they came into contact experienced to their disadvantage this predominance of the Talmudical spirit in the Polish Jews. The Polish sons of the Talmud paid little attention to the fact, that the Talmud and the great teachers of Judaism objected even more strongly to taking advantage of those of a different faith than of those of their own race.

This corruption of the Polish Jews was avenged upon them in a terrible way, and the result was, that the rest of the Jews in Europe were for a time infected with it. With fatal blindness the Polish Jews offered the nobility and Jesuits a helping hand in oppressing the Zaporogian Cossacks in the Ukraine and Little Russia. The magnates wished to make profitable slaves of the Cossacks, the Jesuits to convert the Greek heretics into Roman Catholics, the Jews settled in the district wished to enrich themselves and play the lord over these lowest pariahs. They gave the possessors of the Cossack colonies advice how most completely to humiliate,

oppress, torment and ill-use them; they assumed to be official judges over them, and vexed them in their ecclesiastical affairs. No wonder that the enslaved Cossacks hated the Jews almost more than their noble and clerical foes, because they had most to do with them. The Jews were not without warnings what would be their lot, if these embittered enemies once got the upper hand. In an insurrection of the Zaporogians under their Hetman about 1638, despite its brief duration, they slew 200 Jews, and destroyed several synagogues. Nevertheless, the Jews lent a hand to the increased enslavement of the sufferers by insurrection. They awaited in the year 1648, as fixed by that lying book, the Zohar, the coming of the Messiah and the time of redemption, when they would be in power, and were more reckless and careless than was their custom at other times. The bloody retribution was not long delayed, and it struck the innocent with the guilty, perhaps the former even more than the latter.

It proceeded from a man who understood how to make use of the increasing hatred of the Cossacks for his purposes, and who was regarded by his countrymen as their ideal. Bogdan Chmielnicki (Russian Chmel), born about 1595, died 1657, before whom all Poland trembled for several years, gave to Russia the first opportunity of interfering in the Polish republic, and was a frightful scourge for the Jews. Chmielnicki, brave in war and artful in the execution of his plans, impenetrable in his schemes, at once cruel and hypocritical, was personally irritated against the Jews when he held the subordinate position of camp secretary (Pisar) of the Cossacks, in subjection to the house of Koniecpolski. A Jew, Zacharias Sabilenki, had played him a trick, by which he was robbed of his wife and property. Another had betrayed him when he had come to an understanding with the Tartars. Besides

injuries which his race had sustained from the Jewish lessees in the Ukraine, he had therefore personal wrongs also to avenge. His remark to the Cossacks, "The Poles have delivered us as slaves to the cursed breed of the Jews," was enough to excite them. The vengeance-breathing Zaporogians and the booty-loving Tartars in a short time put to flight the Polish troops by successful manœuvres (May 18, 1648). Potockli, the lieutenant-general, and 8,000 Poles, according to agreement, were delivered to the Tartars. After the victory the wild troops went eastward from the Dnieper between Kiev and Pultava, plundering and murdering all, especially the Jews who had not taken flight; the number of the murdered reached several thousands. Hundreds for appearance sake underwent the form of baptism peculiar to the Greek Church, in order to save themselves. Fortunate were those who fell into captivity with the Tartars, and who were transported to the Crimea and ransomed thence by Turkish Jews. Four Jewish communities (Porobischa and others) with about 3,000 souls resolved to escape massacre, and surrendered to the Tartars with all their property. They were well treated and sold to Turkey, where they were ransomed in a brotherly manner by those of their own race. The Constantinople community sent deputies to Holland to collect from the rich communities money for the ransom of captives.

Unfortunately for the Poles and Jews, King Vladislav, for whom Chmielnicki showed some respect, had been removed by death. During the interregnum of several months from May to October, 1648, the usual Polish dissension occurred, which crippled every attempt at resistance. At first Chmielnicki drew back, apparently inclined to negotiation with the Crown, but he gave his creatures full power to traverse and ravage the Polish provinces. Regular troops of



murderers were formed, who called themselves Haidamaks (the Tartar word for partizans) under brutal leaders who cared not a straw for human life, and who revelled in the death-struggles of their Polish and Jewish foes. They, influenced by fanaticism, were sent forth by the Greek popes expressly to murder Catholics and Jews in the name of religion. Every commander of a troop had his own method of exercising his cruelty. One had thongs slung round the necks of Catholic and Jewish women, who were thus dragged along; this he called "presenting them with a red ribbon." Only a few weeks after the first victory of the Cossacks, a troop under another of these chiefs advanced against the stronghold of Nemirov, where 6,000 Jews, inhabitants and fugitives from the neighbourhood, had assembled; they were in possession of the fortress, and closed the gates. But the Cossacks had an understanding with the Greek Christians in the town, and put on Polish uniforms in order to be taken for Poles. Then the Christian inhabitants urged the Jews to open the gates to their brethren. They did so, and were suddenly attacked by the Cossacks and inhabitants of the town, and almost entirely cut down amid frightful tortures (20 Siwan—10th June, 1648).

Another Haidamak troop under Kryvonoss attacked the town of Tulczyn, where about 600 Christians and 2,000 Jews had taken refuge in the fortress. There were brave Jews among them, or necessity had made them brave, and they would not die without resistance. Nobles and Jews assured each other with an oath that they would defend the town and fortress to the last man. As the Cossack peasants understood nothing of the art of siege, and repeatedly suffered severely from the sorties of the Jews and Poles, they resorted to a trick. They assured the nobles that it was only at the Jews, their deadly foes, that they had aimed; if these were

delivered up, they would withdraw. The infatuated nobles, forgetful of their oaths, therefore made a proposal to the Jews that they should deliver up their arms. The Jews at first thought of turning on the Poles for their treachery, as they exceeded them in numbers. But the Rabbi of Tulczyn warned them against attacking the Poles, who would inflict bloody vengeance for it, and all Poland would be excited against the Jews, who by this means would be everywhere exterminated. He implored them rather to sacrifice themselves for their brethren in the whole country; perhaps the Cossacks would accept their property as ransom. The Jews consented, and delivered up their arms, the Poles thereupon admitting the troops into the town. After the latter had taken everything from the Jews, they set before them the choice of death or baptism. But not one of them would purchase his life at that price; about 1,500 were tortured and executed before the eyes of the Polish nobles (4th Tamuz—24th June). The Cossacks left only ten Rabbis alive, in order to extort large sums from the communities. But the Poles were immediately punished for their treachery. Deprived of the assistance of the Jews, they were attacked by the Cossacks and slain, as an example that violators of their word could not reckon on fidelity towards themselves. This sad event had, at least, the good effect that the Poles were afterwards always in favour of the Jews, and were not opposed to them in the course of the long war.

At the same time another Haidamak troop, under a leader named Hodki, had penetrated into Little Russia, and caused dreadful slaughter among the communities residing there at Homel, Starodub, Czernigov, and other places east and north of Kiev. The Jews of Homel are said to have suffered martyrdom most firmly, even on the same day on which the Tulczynian community was annihilated.

The leader of the troop had all the Jews of Homel, inhabitants as well as fugitives, stripped outside the town, surrounded by Cossacks, and called upon them to be baptised or to expect the most frightful death. They all preferred death, to the number of about 1,500 men, women and children.

Prince Vishnioviecki, the only heroic figure amongst the Poles at that time, a man of penetrating keenness of vision, of intrepid courage and generalship, attached himself to the persecuted Jews with devoted zeal. He took the fugitives under the protecting wings of his small, but brave force, with which he everywhere pursued the roaming bands to destruction. But, because of his limited power, he could accomplish nothing of lasting import. Through petty jealousy, he was passed over at the election of the commander-in-chief against the Cossack insurrection, and instead of him three were chosen, as if to help on Chmielnicki to further victories.

Annoyed at this pitiful policy of the Primate of Gnesen, who was regent, Vishnioviecki followed his own course, but was compelled by the overpowering number of the roving troops, and the Greek Catholic population who sympathised with them, to retreat, which brought to destruction the Jews who had reckoned on his heroic courage. In the fortress of Palonnoie, between Zaslav and Zytomir, 10,000 Jews, partly inhabitants and partly fugitives from the neighbourhood, are said to have perished at the hand of the besieging Haidamaks and the traitorous inhabitants (13th Ab, 22nd July).

The result of the second war between Poles and Cossacks (Sept., 1648), was unfortunate, for the Polish army, more through dread of the Tartars under Tugaï Bey and the incapacity of their generals than through Chmielnicki's bravery, was scattered in wild flight. They did not collect again until they



had retired behind the walls of Lemberg, where a bloody fate befell those Jews who thought themselves safe at that distance from the field of battle. There was no escape for them from the overwhelming storm of the Zaporogians, unless they could reach the Wallachian borders. Traces of the blood of slaughtered and down-trodden Jews marked the vast tract from the South Ukraine, past Dubno and Brody, to Lemberg; in the town of Bar alone from two to three thousand perished. It scarcely need be said that the brutal cruelty of the regular Cossacks, as well as of the wild Haidamaks, made no distinction between Rabbanites and Karaites. The important community of Lemberg lost many of its members through hunger and pestilence, and its whole property besides, which it had to pay to the Cossacks as ransom.

In the town of Narol the Zaporogians effected a butchery hitherto unheard of. It is said that in the beginning of November 45,000 men were slain there with the cruellest tortures, of whom there were 1,200 Jews. Among the corpses remained living women and children, who for several days had to feed on human flesh. Meanwhile the Haidamaks roamed about in Volhynia, Podolia, and West Russia, and slaked their revenge in the blood of the nobles, Catholics, clergy, and Jews to thousands and tens of thousands. In Crzemieniec an inhuman monster slew hundreds of Jewish children, scornfully examined the corpses, as the Jews do with cattle, and threw them to the dogs. In many towns the Jews, as well as the Catholics, armed themselves, and drove the bloodthirsty Cossacks away.

The election of a king, which at last followed—and, though the Polish state was on the brink of an abyss, took place amidst fights and commotions—put an end to the bloodshed for the moment. Although for most part in a drunken condition, Chmielnicki retained sobriety enough to dic-

tate, among his conditions of peace, that in the Cossack provinces no Catholic church should be tolerated, nor any Jew live there. The commission, which could not accept the conditions, departed without settling the business (16th February, 1649). The Jews, who had reckoned upon a settlement and stayed at home, paid the penalty of their confidence with death, for the Cossacks swarmed about the towns with death-cries. Thus, for the second time, many Jews and nobles perished at Ostrog (March 4th, 1649).

The breaking off of the negotiation with Chmielnicki led to a second battle. Although the Polish army this time appeared better armed on the field of battle, it yet had just as little success as before. In the battle at Sbaráz the Polish army would have been completely destroyed by the Zaporogians and Tartars, if the king had not wisely come to an understanding with the Tartar chief. Thereupon followed the conclusion of peace (August, 1649), which only confirmed Chmielnicki's programme, among other points that concerning the Jews. In the chief possessions of the Cossacks (*i.e.*, in the Ukraine, West Russia, Kiev and a part of Podolia) they could neither own nor rent landed estates, nor live there at all.

In consequence of this convention, the Poles and Jews were at peace for about a year and a half, although on both sides schemes were harboured for breaking the agreement at the first opportunity. As far as residence was allowed them the fugitive Jews returned to their homes. King John Casimir, on his election, allowed the Jews who had been baptised according to the Greek confession openly to profess Judaism. In consequence of this the baptised Jews fled from the Catholic districts to Poland to be free from compulsory Christianity. This permission was especially used by Jewish women whom the rude Zaporogians had married. The Jews brought back

many hundreds of children, who had lost their parents and relatives, and had been brought up in Christianity, in order to investigate their descent, and hung the indication of it in a small roll round their necks, that they might not afterwards marry blood relations. The general synod of Rabbis and leaders which assembled at Lublin in 1650 had enough to do to heal even partially the wounds of Judaism. Many hundreds, or rather thousands, of Jewish women did not know whether their husbands lay in the grave or were begging in the east or west, in Turkey or Germany, whether they were widows or wives, or they found themselves in other perplexities which the Rabbinical law had created. The synod of Lublin is said to have hit upon excellent arrangements. Most probably the lenient Lipmann Heller, then Rabbi of Cracow, strove to effect a mild interpretation of the law relating to supposed death. At the instigation of the young, genial Rabbi Sabbataï Cohen (Shach), the day of the first massacre at Nemirov (20 Siwan) was appointed as a general fast day for the remnant of the Polish community. The hoary Lipmann Heller, at Cracow, Sabbataï Hurwitz, at Posen, and the young Sabbataï Cohen drew up penitential prayers (Selichot) for this sad memorial day, mostly selected from older pieces.

After a pause of a year and a half, the war between the Cossacks and Poles broke out in the early part of the year 1651, the first victims of which were again the Jews, as Chmielnicki and the wild Zaporogians now fell upon the Polish territory where Jewish communities had again settled. The massacre, however, could no longer be so extensive; there were no more thousands of Jews to slaughter. Moreover, during these evil days, the Jews had taken courage, and had armed and furnished the king with a troop of Jewish soldiers. Meanwhile the fortune of war turned against the Cossacks,



and they were obliged to accept the peace dictated to them by the king (November 11th, 1651). John Casimir and his minister did not forget expressly to guard the rights of the Jews in the treaty. They were to be permitted to settle, as before, anywhere in the Ukraine, and to hold property on lease.

This treaty also was concluded and ratified only to be broken. Chmielnicki had accepted it in order to strengthen himself and his shattered reputation among the Cossacks. As soon as he had gained his first object, he again began hostilities against the Poles, from which the Jews always suffered most severely. In two years after the first insurrection of the Zaporogians, more than 300 communities were completely destroyed by death or flight, though the end of their sufferings had not yet arrived. The Polish troops could not withstand the violent attacks or skilful policy of Chmielnicki. When he could no longer hope for help from the Tartars, he combined with the Russians, and incited them to a war against unhappy Poland, still divided against itself. In consequence of the Russian war in the early part of 1654 and 1655, those communities suffered which had been spared by the swarms of Cossacks, *i.e.*, the western districts and Lithuania. The community of Wilna, one of the largest, was completely depopulated (July, 1655) by slaughter on the part of the Russians and migration. As if fate had even then determined upon the partition of Poland, a new enemy was added to the Cossacks and Russians in Charles X. of Sweden, who used the first favourable pretext for slaking his thirst for war on Poland. Through the Swedish war, the communities of Great and Little Poland, from Posen to Cracow, were reduced to want and despair. The Jews of Poland had to drink the cup of poison to the dregs. The Polish general, Czarnicki, who hated the Jews,

ill-used those whom the Cossacks, Russians, and the wild Swedes had spared during the Thirty Years' War, under the pretence that they had a traitorous understanding with the Swedes. The Poles also behaved barbarously to the Jews, destroyed the synagogues, and tore up their Hebrew books. All Poland was like a bloody field of battle, on which Cossacks, Russians, Prussians and Swedes, and also the troops of Prince Ragoczi of Transylvania wrestled; the Jews were ill-used or slain by all. Only the great Prince of Brandenburg behaved more leniently to them. The number of Jewish families who are said to have perished in the ten years of this war (600,000) is certainly exaggerated, but the slaughtered Jews of Poland may well be rated at a quarter of a million. With the fall of Poland as a great power, the importance of Polish Judaism also disappeared. The remnant were impoverished, depressed, and could not recover their former position. Their need was so great, that those who were driven to the neighbourhood of Prussia hired themselves to Christians as day labourers for field work.

As at the time of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal, every place was filled by fugitive Sephardic Jews, so during the Cossack-Polish war, fugitive Jews were to be met with, wretched in appearance, with hollow eyes, who had escaped the bath of blood, burning hunger and sickness; or, who, having been dragged by the Tartars into captivity and ransomed by their brethren, sought shelter anywhere. Westwards, past the Danube and the Vistula district, Jewish-Polish fugitives wandered to Amsterdam, and were forwarded thence to Frankfort-on-the-Maine and other Rhenish cities. Three thousand Lithuanian Jews came to Texel in the Netherlands, and were hospitably received. Southwards many fled to Moravia, Bohemia, Austria and Hungary,



and wandered from those places to Italy. The prisoners in the armies of the Tartars came to the Turkish provinces, and some of them were sent to Barbary. Everywhere they were received by their brethren with great cordiality and love, cared for, clothed and supported. The Italian Jews performed their duty of ransoming and supporting them at great sacrifice. Thus the community of Leghorn at this time formed a resolution to raise and spend a quarter of their income for the liberation and maintenance of the unfortunate Polish Jews. The German and Austrian communities, also, although they had suffered under the calamities of the Thirty Years' War, exercised towards them that brotherly feeling which they professed less with their lips, but cherished the more deeply in their hearts.

Meanwhile the number and misery of those who had escaped from Poland was so great, that the German communities and others were obliged to devote the money intended for Jerusalem to the Polish Jews, who were in such sore need of food, clothing and shelter. The Jews living on alms in Jerusalem, who were also persecuted by the Pasha and his subordinates, felt the want of the regular support which came to them from Europe. They at once fell into such distress, that of the 700 widows and a smaller number of men living there, nearly 400 are said to have died of hunger.

The Cossack persecution of the Jews, in a sense, remodelled Judaism. It became Polonised, so to speak, by means of it. If the Polish-Rabbinical mode of teaching had already formally dominated the Talmudical schools of Germany and Italy, through the abundant literature by Polish authors, it now through the fugitives—who were mainly Talmudical scholars—became the authority for Judaism. Rabbinical appointments were mostly conferred on Polish Talmudists in Moravia, Amsterdam, Furth, Frank-

fort and Metz. These Polish Talmudists were just as proud, on account of their superiority in their department as the Spanish and Portuguese fugitives formerly were, and looked down with contempt on the Rabbis who spoke German, Portuguese and Italian. Far from giving up their own method in a foreign country, they demanded that all the world should be regulated by them, and they gained their point. People joked about the "Polacks," but nevertheless became subordinate to them. Whoever wished to acquire thorough Talmudic and Rabbinical knowledge was obliged to sit at the feet of Polish Rabbis; every father of a family who wished to educate his children in the Talmud sought a Polish Rabbi for them. These Polish Rabbis gradually forced their sophisticated piety upon the German, and on the Portuguese and Italian communities. Through their influence, scientific knowledge and the study of the Bible declined still more than previously. Just in the century of Descartes and Spinoza, when the three Christian nations, the French, English, and Dutch, gave the death-blow to the Middle Ages, the Jewish-Polish emigrants, who had been baited by Chmielnicki's bands, brought a new middle age over European Judaism, which maintained itself in full vigour for more than a century, and has to some extent lasted to our time.

## CHAPTER II.

### SETTLEMENT OF THE JEWS IN ENGLAND, AND MANASSEH BEN ISRAEL.

Obstacles in the way of the Resettlement of the Jews in England—Manasseh ben Israel—His Character and Attainments—Christian Students of Jewish Literature : Scaliger and the Buxtorfs, Selden, and Vossius—Women devote themselves to Hebrew—The Fifth-Monarchy Men : Expectation of the Millennium—Enthusiastic Friends of the Jews—The Puritans—Cromwell and Holmes—Nicholas' Protection of the Jews—"The Hope of Israel"—Fresh Victims of the Inquisition—Manasseh ben Israel's Negotiations with the English Parliament—He journeys to London, and is graciously received by Cromwell—A Council sits at Whitehall to decide the Question of the Re-admission of the Jews—Prynne's anti-Jewish Work—Controversial Pamphlets—Manasseh's "Vindication"—The Re-admission of the Jews secretly connived at.

1655—1657.

JUST at the very time when the Jews of Poland were trodden down, slaughtered, or driven through Europe like terrified wild beasts, a land of freedom was opened, from which the Jews had been banished for more than three centuries and a half. England, which the wise Queen Elizabeth and the brave Cromwell had raised to be the first power in Europe, and which had a very different importance from crumbling Poland, again admitted Jews, not indeed through the great portal, but through the back door. Yet this admission was so bruited abroad, that it was like a triumph for Judaism. The Jews of Amsterdam and Hamburg looked with longing to this island, to which they were so near, with whose merchants, shipowners, and scholars they were in connection, and which promised them wide scope for the exercise of their varied abilities. But their settlement there seemed beset with



insuperable obstacles. The English episcopal church, which exercised sway over the English conscience, was even more intolerant than the Popery which it persecuted. It did not grant freedom to Catholics and Dissenters; and should it tolerate the descendants of those who were aspersed in the New Testament? The English people, who for centuries had scarcely seen a Jew, shared to the full the antipathy of the clergy. To them every Jew was a Shylock, who, with hearty goodwill, would like to cut the Christian to pieces—a monster in human form, who bore the mark of Cain. Who should undertake to banish this strong prejudice in order to render people and rulers favourable to the coming of Israel?

The man who undertook and executed this difficult task did not belong to the first rank of intellectual men, but possessed the right measure of insight and narrowness, strength of will and flexibility, knowledge and imagination, self-denial and vanity, required for so arduous an undertaking. Manasseh ben Israel, second or third Rabbi at Amsterdam, who at home played only a subordinate part, the poor preacher who, to support his family, was obliged to resort to the trade of book-printing, but who obtained so little profit from it, that he wished to exchange pulpit eloquence for mercantile speculation, and was near settling in Brazil; he it was who won England for Judaism, and, if he did not banish, diminished the prejudice against his race. To him belongs a merit not to be lightly estimated, for but few companions stood by his side to help him. The release of the Jews from their thousand years' contempt and depreciation in European society, or rather the struggle for civil equality, begins with Manasseh ben Israel. He was the Riesser of the seventeenth century. He was not, as has been stated, in the true sense great, and can only

be reckoned a man of mediocrity. He belonged to the happily constituted class of persons, who do not perceive the harsh contrasts and shrill discords in the world around, and are hence confiding and enterprising. His heart was deeper than his mind. His power rested in his skilful eloquence, facility in explaining and working out ideas which lay within a narrow field of vision, and which he had rather acquired than produced. Manasseh ben Israel had a complete grasp of the Jewish literature and Christian theology at the stage it had reached in his time, and knew well what was to be said on each point, *i.e.*, what had been said by his predecessors. On the other hand he had only a superficial knowledge of those branches of learning which require keenness of intellect, such as philosophy and the Talmud. His strength was also in one respect his weakness. Facility in speaking and writing encouraged in him a verbose style and excessive productiveness. He left behind him more than 400 sermons in Portuguese, and he also composed a mass of writings that would fill a catalogue, which however only superficially discuss the subjects treated in them. Manasseh's contemporaries looked upon his writings with different eyes, the learning amassed therein from all literatures and languages, and the smoothness of form rivetted their attention and excited their admiration. Among the Jews he was extraordinarily celebrated; whoever could produce Latin, Portuguese, or Spanish verse, made known his praise. But even Christian scholars of his time over-estimated him.

In Holland, which, by the concurrence of many circumstances, and especially through the powerful impulse of Joseph Scaliger, the prince of philologists, had become in a certain sense the school of Europe, the foundation was laid in the seventeenth century for that wonderful learning which was contained in extensive folios. At no time had

so many philologists appeared with early-matured learning, iron memory, and wonderful devotion to the knowledge of language, as in the first half of the seventeenth century, which seemed almost to have been specially appointed to revive what had been so long neglected. All that antiquity had left in written treasures was collected and utilized; statesmen vied with professional scholars. With this gigantic collection there was little critical search for truth, but merely for massive knowledge. The ambition of many was spurred on to understand the three favourite languages of antiquity—Greek, Latin, and Hebrew—and their literatures. Hebrew, as the language of religion, still enjoyed a special preference, and whoever understood it as well as the other two tongues was sure of distinction. Joseph Scaliger, the oracle of Dutch and Protestant theology, had acquired together with the Hebrew language, the so-called Rabbinical literature, and civil law, and treated the Talmud with a certain respect. His Dutch, French, and English disciples followed his example, and devoted themselves with zeal to this branch of knowledge, which had formerly been regarded with contempt and a certain aversion.

John Buxtorf, senior (born 1564, died 1639), at Basle, had brought his knowledge of Hebrew and Rabbinical literature to a kind of mastery, and rendered it accessible to Christian circles. He carried on a lively correspondence in Hebrew with Jewish scholars in Amsterdam, Germany and Constantinople. Even ladies devoted themselves to the Hebrew language and literature. The wonderful girl, Anna Maria Schurmann, of Utrecht, who knew almost all European languages and their literature, corresponded in Hebrew with scholars, and also with an English lady, Dorothea Moore, and quoted Rashi and Ibn Ezra with a scholar's accuracy. The eccentric Queen Christina of Swe-



den, the learned daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, understood Hebrew. Statesmen, such as Hugh Grotius, and the English John Selden, seriously and deeply engaged in the pursuit of it for their theological and historical studies.

But no Christian scholars, with all their zeal, had yet acquired independence in Rabbinical literature; they could not move unless with a Jewish guide, without whom they felt unsafe. To Christian inquirers Manasseh ben Israel's treatises, which presented many Rabbinical passages and new points of view, were extraordinarily welcome. Much of the Talmudic literature became accessible through his clear exposition. Hence, the Dutch scholars sought out Manasseh, courted his friendship, hung upon his lips, and gradually discarded the prejudice against the Jews which even the most liberal-minded men in the most tolerant country of Europe had not laid aside. At first the curious inquirers who adhered to Manasseh, were persecuted or injured by the ruling church. The learned Vossius family, John Gerard Vossius, senior, although filled with a strong hatred against the Jews, was affable to Manasseh. His son, Dionysius Vossius, a prodigy of learning, snatched away by death in his eighteenth year, on his death-bed translated into Latin Manasseh's "Reconciler" (Conciliador) shortly after its appearance. Isaac Vossius, the youngest son, who filled an honourable office under the Queen of Sweden, recommended Manasseh ben Israel to her. By this family he was made acquainted with the learned statesman, Hugh Grotius, who also received instruction from him. The chief of the Arminians, Simon Episcopius, sought Manasseh's acquaintance, as did Caspar Barlæus, who as a Socinian, *i.e.*, a denier of the Trinity, was avoided by orthodox Christians. He attached himself to Manasseh, and sang his praise in Latin verses, on which account



he was attacked yet more violently, because he had put the Jewish faith on an equality with the Christian. The learned Jesuit, Peter Daniel Huet, also cultivated his friendship. Gradually the Chacham and preacher of Amsterdam acquired such a reputation among Christians, that every scholar travelling through that city sought him out as an extraordinary personage. Foreigners exchanged letters with him, and obtained from him explanations on difficult points. Manasseh had an interview with Queen Christina of Sweden, in which he stimulated her kindness for the Jews, and her liking for Jewish literature. So highly did many Christians rate Manasseh ben Israel, that they could not suppress the wish to see so learned and excellent a Rabbi won over to Christianity.

Most of all did Christian visionaries crowd to Manasseh ben Israel, who dreamt of the coming of the Fifth Monarchy, the reign of the saints (according to the language of Daniel). The Thirty Years' War which had delivered property and life over to wild soldiers, the tyrannical oppression of believers struggling for inward freedom and morality—in England by the bishops and secular government, and in France by the despotic Richelieu—awakened in visionary men the idea that the Messianic time of the millennium, announced in the book of Daniel and the Apocalypse, was near, and that their sufferings were only the forerunners of the approaching time of grace. These fantastic visionaries showed themselves very favourable to the Jews; they wished this great change to be effected with the participation of those to whom the announcement had first been made. They however conceded that the Jews must first take possession of the Holy Land, which could not easily be accomplished, even by a miracle. For the lost Ten Tribes must first be found and gathered together, if the prophetic words were not to fall to the ground. Consequently the

tribes assembled to take possession of the Holy Land must have their Messiah, an offshoot of the stem predicted by Isaiah. But what then should become of Jesus as Christ, *i.e.*, Messiah, in whom the Jews certainly did not believe? Some visionaries of the Fifth Monarchy of saints made the concession of granting the Jews a Messiah of their own, in the expectation that the struggle for precedence between the Jewish and Christian saviour and redeemer would be brought to an end by intervening circumstances.

Such apocalyptic dreams struck a responsive chord in Manasseh ben Israel's heart. He also expected, if not the thousand years' reign of the saints, yet, according to Kabbalistic reckoning, the speedy advent of the time of the Messiah. The Zohar, the book revered by him as divine, announced in unambiguous terms, that the time of grace for Israel would begin with the year 5408 of the world (1648). Manasseh was above everything mystic in his innermost being, his classical and literary education being only an external varnish, which did not diminish his belief in miracles. Hence he was pleased with the letter which a Christian visionary of Dantzic sent him, expressing concurrence in the hope of the Jews for the restoration of their former glory. John Mochinger, of an old Tyrolese noble family, who had fallen into the whirlpool of mysticism, wrote to Manasseh ben Israel in the midst of an eulogium on his learning: "You may know and be convinced from me that I duly honour your doctrinal teaching, and, with other brethren in the faith, earnestly desire that Israel may at last be enlightened with the true light, and enjoy its ancient renown and happiness." At a later period another German mystic of Dantzic, came into connection with the Kabbalistic Chacham of Amsterdam—*viz.*, Abraham v. Frankenberg, a nobleman and disciple

of Jacob Böhme. He spoke out fearlessly: "The true light will come from the Jews; their time is not far off. From day to day news will be heard in different places of something wonderful which will come to pass in their favour, and all islands shall rejoice with them." Manasseh had in his immediate neighbourhood two Christian friends, Henry Jesse and Peter Serrarius, who were enthusiastically excited in favour of Israel's glorification. In France also there lived in the service of the great Condé a visionary of a peculiar sort, Isaac la Peyrère of Bordeaux, a Huguenot, perhaps even of Jewish-Marrano blood. He had the strange notion that there were men before Adam (pre-Adamites), from whom all men were descended except the Jews. In a book which he wrote on the subject, and which brought him to the dungeon of the Inquisition, he attached great importance to the Jews in the future. In another work on "The Return of the Jews," he explained that the Jews must be recalled from their dispersion in all parts of the world, in order finally to return to the Holy Land. The King of France, as the eldest son of the Church, had the vocation of bringing about this return. He, too, entered into communication with Manasseh.

There were then in England some who most ardently revered "God's people," and who had powerful influence in the council and the camp. At the time when the Germans fought each other on account of difference of creed, invoking the interference of foreigners, and impairing their own freedom and power, England was gaining what could never afterwards be taken away, religious and, at the same time, political freedom, and this made it a most powerful and prosperous country. In Germany all religious parties, Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists, in selfish blindness had secured religious freedom each for itself alone, reserving for others only oppression or persecution.



This mutual opposition of the Germans was utilised by their princes in order to confirm their own despotic power. In England, it is true, selfishness prevailed among the Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Catholics, but there arose a fourth party whose motto was religious freedom for all. The senseless despotism of Charles I. and the narrow-mindedness of the Long Parliament had played into the hands of this intelligent and powerful party. England, like Germany, resembled a great blood-stained battle-field, but it had produced men who knew what they wanted, who staked their lives thereupon, and effected a rejuvenescence of the nation. Oliver Cromwell was at once the head which devised sound ideas, and the arm which carried them into effect. He and the army of religious freedom attached to him, fought with the sword, not only for themselves, but also for others. He and his officers were not revengeful freebooters or blood-thirsty soldiers, but high-minded and inspired warriors of God, who waged war both against wickedness and falseness of heart. They dreamt they could introduce a moral order into the world, a kingdom of God, and they undertook to carry their hopes into effect. Like the Maccabees of old, the Puritan warriors had "the sword in the hand, and the praise of God in the mouth." Cromwell and his soldiers also often read the Bible when they were fighting. But not out of the New Testament could the Roundheads derive their inspiration and warlike courage. The Christian Bible, with its monkish forms, its exorcism of devils, its praying brethren and heavenly saints, supplied no models for warriors who had to contend with a faithless king, a false aristocracy and unholy priests. Only the great heroes of the Old Testament, who had the fear of God at heart and the sword in hand, warriors both religious and national, could serve as models for the Puritans: the Judges, who freed the oppressed

people from the yoke of foreign domination; Saul, David and Joab, who routed the foes of their country; and Jehu, who made an end of an idolatrous and blasphemous royal house—these were the favourite characters with the Puritanical warriors. In every verse of the Biblical writings, in Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings, they saw their own camp reflected, every psalm seemed composed peculiarly for them, showing that they, though surrounded on every side by ungodly foes, should not fear while they trusted in God. Oliver Cromwell compared himself to the judge Gideon, who first followed the voice of God in trembling, but afterwards courageously scattered the attacking heathens; or to Judas Maccabæus, who out of a handful of martyrs formed a host of victorious warriors.

To bury oneself in the history, prophecy, and poetry of the Old Testament, to revere them as the effusion of divine inspiration, to live in them with all the emotions of the heart, and yet not to consider the people who had originated all this glory and greatness, as especially preferred and selected, was impossible. Among the Puritans, therefore, were many earnest admirers of "God's people," and Cromwell also joined in this admiration. It seemed an astonishing marvel that this people, whom God had so highly distinguished with great favour and stern discipline, or a remnant of it, should still exist. A desire was excited in the hearts of the Puritans to see this living, wandering wonder, the Jewish people, with their own eyes, to bring them to England, which was about to establish a godly community, and thus in some way impress a seal upon it. The sentiments which the Puritans felt towards the Jews were expressed in Oliver Cromwell's observation, "Great is my sympathy with this poor people, whom God chose, and to whom He gave His law; Jesus rejected them, because they did not acknowledge him as Messiah."

Cromwell dreamt of a reconciliation of the Old and New Testaments, of an inward connection between the Jewish people of God and the English puritanical and godly community. But other Puritans had read so deeply in the Old Testament that the New Testament was of no importance for them. The visionaries looking for the Fifth Monarchy or the thousand years' reign of the saints, who were in Cromwell's army and among the members of Parliament, especially awarded to the Jewish people a glorious position in the thousand years' reign that was to be expected. A Puritan preacher, Nathaniel Holmes (Holmesius) wished, according to the letter of many prophetic verses, to become the servant of Israel, and to tend him on bended knees. The more the tension in England increased through the imprisonment of the king, the dissensions between the Presbyterian Long Parliament and the Puritanical army, the civil war, and lastly through the execution of King Charles and the establishment of a republic in England, the more did public life and church-preaching assume, so to speak, a Jewish tendency. The only thing wanting was for the orators in Parliament to speak Hebrew in order to realise a return to Judæa. One author proposed to choose the Sabbath instead of the Sunday for the day of rest, and showed in a work the holiness of this day, and the duty of the English people to honour it. This was in the beginning of 1649. Parliament, it is true, condemned this work to be burnt as heretical, scandalous and profane, and sentenced the printer and author to punishment. But the Israelite spirit among the Puritans, and especially among the levellers or ultra-republicans, was not suppressed by these means. Many wished that the laws of the State should declare the Torah to be the code of law for England.

These proceedings in the British islands, which



promised the exaltation of Israel at no distant period, were followed by Manasseh with beating heart. Should these voices not announce the coming of the Messianic kingdom? He hoped so, and put forth a feverish activity to help in bringing about the desired time. He entertained a visionary train of thought. The Messiah could not appear till the punishment of Israel had been fulfilled, and it had been scattered from one end of the earth to the other. Now there were no Jews then living in England. Therefore exertions must be made to obtain permission for the Jews to dwell in England, that this hindrance to the advent of the Messiah might be removed. Manasseh therefore put himself in communication with some important persons, who assured him that "the minds of men at that time were favourable to the Jews, and that they would be acceptable and welcome to Englishmen." What especially justified his hopes was an Apology in the name of Edward Nicholas, former secretary to Parliament, "for the honourable nation of the Jews." In this work, which the author dedicated to the Long Parliament, the Jews were throughout treated, as the chosen people of God, with a tenderness to which up to that time they had not been at all accustomed. Hence the author felt it necessary to affirm at the end, that he wrote it, not at the instigation of the Jews, but out of love to God and his country. The opinion of the apologist was, that the great sufferings brought upon England by the religious and civil war were a just punishment, because the English had injured the saints and favourites of God, *i.e.*, the Jews, and an urgent admonition was given to atone for this great sin by admitting them and showing them brotherly treatment. The author proved the preference and selection of Israel with many Biblical quotations. He referred to a preacher who had said in Parliament in connection with the verse: "Touch

not mine Anointed, and do my prophets no harm," that the weal or woe of the world depended upon the good or bad treatment of God's people. God has according to His secret counsel sustained this people to the present day, and a glorious future is reserved for them. Hence it was the duty of Englishmen to endeavour to comfort them, and (if it were possible) give them satisfaction for the innocent blood of theirs shed in this kingdom, and to restore them to commerce amongst us. This work also defends the Jews against the accusation of having crucified Jesus. The death of Jesus took place at the instigation of the Synhedrion, not of the people. In most impressive terms it urges the English to comfort the afflicted and unhappy Jews. The Pope and his adherents must have been enraged at the kind treatment of the Jews, for they still inflicted cruelty and humiliation upon the people of God. The Popes, it is said, compelled the Jews to wear opprobrious badges, and the Catholics avoided all contact with them, because the Jews abhorred idols and heathen worship.

This work, which was more than friendly, and absolutely glorified the Jews, excited the greatest attention in England and Holland. Manasseh ben Israel was delighted with it, thinking he was near his object; his friend, Holmes, at once communicated with him on the subject, saying that Manasseh himself should write about it, and prepare a work in which he would exalt the importance of the Jews for the moulding of the future. Manasseh ben Israel immediately set to work to promote this object to the utmost. He, however, as well as the Christian mystics in England, had anxiety at heart; what had become of the lost Ten Tribes which the Assyrian king Shalmanassar banished? A restoration of the Jewish kingdom without these Ten Tribes seemed impossible, nay,

belief in the prophetic promises depended upon it. The union of Judah and Israel which many prophets had so impressively announced would remain unfulfilled if the Ten Tribes had ceased to exist. Manasseh therefore laid great stress upon being able to prove their existence somewhere.

Fortunately Manasseh ben Israel was placed in a position to specify the situation of the Ten Tribes. Some years before a Jewish traveller named Montezinos had affirmed on oath that he had seen in a part of South America native Jews of the tribe of Reuben, and had held communication with them. The circumstances with which he related it excited curiosity and made his contemporaries inclined to believe. Antonio de Montezinos was a Marrano, whom business or love of travel had led to America. There he had stumbled upon a Mestizo Indian, who excited in him an impression that there were tribes living in America who were persecuted and oppressed by the Indians as the Indians had been by the Spaniards.

Antonio de Montezinos, otherwise Aaron Levi, had brought this surprising news to Amsterdam, and had sworn to it before several persons and also to Manasseh ben Israel about 1644. Afterwards he went to Brazil, and there died. On his deathbed he had repeatedly asserted the truth of the existence of some Israelite tribes in America. Manasseh ben Israel was firmly convinced by the statement of this man, and made it the foundation of a work, entitled "Israel's Hope," which he especially composed to pave the way for the Messianic time. The Ten Tribes, according to his assumption, had been dispersed in Tartary and China, and some might have gone thence to the American continent. Some indications and certain manners and customs of the Indians, resembling those of the Jews, seemed to him in favour this idea. The prophetic an-



nouncement of the perpetuity of the Israelite people had accordingly been confirmed; the tribes were ready to come forth from their hiding-place and to unite with the others. The time of redemption, which, it was true, could not be calculated beforehand—and in the calculation of which many had erred—appeared at last to be approaching. The prophets' threats of punishment had been fulfilled in a terrible manner for the Jews; why should not their hope-awakening promises also be verified? What unspeakable cruelty had not the monster of the Inquisition inflicted, and still continued to inflict, on the poor innocents of the Jewish race, on adults and children of every age and either sex! For what reason? Because they would not depart from the Law of Moses, which had been revealed to them amidst so many miracles. Therefore numberless victims had perished in all parts under the tyrannical rule of the Inquisition. And yet martyrs showed incredible firmness, and were even burnt alive honouring the name of God.

Manasseh enumerated all the auto-da-fés of Marranos and other martyrs who believed in Judaism, which had taken place up to his time.

Great excitement was caused among the Dutch Portuguese Jews by the burning to death of a young Marrano, twenty-five years old, who was well read in Latin and Greek literature. Isaac de Castro-Tartas, born at Tartas, a small town in Gascony, had come with his parents to Amsterdam. Glowing with zeal and a desire to bring back to Judaism those Marranos who still continued Christians, he prepared to travel to Brazil. In vain had his parents and friends warned him against this mad step. In Bahia he was arrested by the Portuguese, declared to be a Jew, sent to Lisbon, and handed over to the Inquisition. This body had no formal right over Isaac de Castro, for he had been committed to prison as a Dutch citizen. The

tribunal at first tried to induce him to abjure Judaism, but this was fruitless. The young de Castro-Tartas endeavoured manfully to endure a martyr's death in honour of his faith. He was put to death as he wished with a certain amount of pomp. In Lisbon the burning pile was kindled for him, and for several others also, on December 22nd, 1647. He cried out of the flames, "Hear, O Israel, God is one," in so impressive a tone that the witnesses of the dreadful spectacle were greatly moved. For several days nothing else was talked of in the capital but the dreadful voice of the martyr Isaac de Castro-Tartas and his "Shema," uttered with his last breath. People spoke of it to one another with horror. The Inquisition was obliged to forbid the utterance of the "Shema" with a threat of heavy punishment. They are also said to have determined to burn no more Jewish heretics alive in Lisbon.

The impression which the news of successive executions of youthful sufferers produced on the Amsterdam community was astounding. De Castro-Tartas had parents, relatives and friends in Amsterdam, and was beloved on account of his knowledge and character. The Rabbi, Saul Morteira, delivered a memorial address on his death. Poets deplored and honoured him in Hebrew and Spanish verses.

Under the impression created by the intelligence of the new deed of horror on the part of the Inquisition against the Jews, Manasseh ben Israel wrote his "Israel's Hope." On reading it, people were again agitated by grief. Indeed, if martyrs could prove the truth and durability of the cause for which they bled, Judaism needed no further proof; for no people and no religion on earth had produced such numerous and firm martyrs. Manasseh used this proof to draw from it the conclusion that, in the same way as sufferings had been inflicted, so



also the promised redemption and régénération of God's people would be fulfilled. He sent this Latin treatise on the existence of the Ten Tribes and their hopes to a highly-placed and learned personage in England, to be read before the Parliament then sitting, which was under Cromwell's influence and that of the State Council. In an accompanying letter Manasseh explained to the Parliament his favourite idea, that the return of the Jews to their native land—the time for which was so near—must be preceded by their general dispersion. The dispersion should, according to the words of Scripture, be from one end of the earth to the other, including the island of England, which lay in the extreme north of the inhabited world. But for more than 300 years no Jews had lived in England, therefore he added the request that the State Council and Parliament would grant the Jews permission to settle in England, to have the free exercise of their religion, and to build synagogues there (1650). Manasseh made no secret of his Messianic hopes, because he could and did reckon upon the fact that the saints or Puritans themselves wished for the "assembling of God's people" in their ancestral home, and were inclined to help and promote it. He also intimated in his work, that he was resolved to go to England in order to arrange matters for the settlement of the Jews.

Manasseh ben Israel had not reckoned amiss. His request and dedication were favourably received by Parliament. Lord Middlesex, probably the mediator, sent him a letter of thanks with the superscription, "To my dear Brother the Hebrew philosopher, Manasseh ben Israel." A passport to England was also sent to him. The English Ambassador in Holland, Lord Oliver St. John, a relative of Cromwell, told him he wished to go to the Amsterdam Synagogue, and gave him to understand, probably according to Cromwell's in-

structions, that England was inclined to gratify the long-cherished wish of the Jews. Manasseh took care that he should be received in the house of prayer with music and hymns (about August, 1651). Meanwhile the object to which he seemed so near was retarded by political complications. England and Holland entered into a fierce war, which broke off the connection between Amsterdam and London. Manasseh became estranged from his elder colleague, Saul Morteira (1652), and the President, Joseph da Costa—it is not known on what account—and in an angry mood formed the resolution to leave Amsterdam. The leaders, indeed, paved the way to a tolerable understanding between the two Chachams, but Manasseh had neither the cheerfulness required nor a favourable opportunity for again taking up his adventurous scheme.

When Oliver Cromwell, however, by the illegal but necessary dissolution of the Long Parliament, had assumed the chief power in April, 1653, and showed an inclination to conclude a peace with the States-General, Manasseh again took up his project. Cromwell had called together a new parliament, the so-called Short, or Barebones Parliament, which was composed merely of saints, *i.e.* Puritanical preachers, officers, and dreamers of the coming millennium. The partiality of Cromwell's officers for the old Jewish order is shown from the circumstance that they in all seriousness proposed that the Council of State should consist of seventy members, after the number of the Jewish Synhedrion. In the Parliament sat General Harrison, a Baptist, who, with his party, wished to see the Mosaic law introduced into England. When the Parliament met (July 5th, 1653), Manasseh hastened to repeat his request, that they would grant the Jews permission to reside in England. The question of the Jews was also immediately afterwards put on

the orders of the day. Parliament sent Manasseh a safe conduct to London, in order that he might conduct the business in person. However, as the war between England and Holland still continued, his relatives and friends urged that he should not expose himself to the danger of a daily change of affairs, and he again put off his voyage to a more favourable time. Meanwhile the Short Parliament was soon dissolved (December 12th, 1653), and Cromwell obtained kingly power under the title of Protector of the Realm. When he concluded peace with Holland (April, 1654), Manasseh thought the time well suited for effecting his wishes for the redemption of Israel. Three admirals of the English fleet had even drawn up a petition in October, 1654, to admit the Jews into England. Manasseh likewise presented his petition for their admission before the second and shorter Parliament, and, probably at his instigation, David Abrabanel Dormido, one of the leading men at Amsterdam, at the same time presented one to the same effect, which Cromwell urgently recommended to the Council for speedy decision (November 3rd, 1654).

Manasseh revelled in intoxicating dreams at the approaching glorious time for Israel. He regarded himself as a chosen instrument of Providence to bring about its fulfilment. In these dreams he was upheld and confirmed by the Christian mystics, who were eagerly awaiting the millennium. The Dutchman, Henry Jesse, had shortly before published a work, "On the Speedy Glory of Judah and Israel," in the Dutch language. The Bohemian physician, mystic and alchemist, Paul Felgenhauer, went beyond the bounds of reason. Disgusted with the dry formal creed of Evangelical doctrine, and the idolatrous tendency of the Catholic Church, he wrote during the Thirty Years' War against the corruption of the Church and the Protestant clergy, and wished for a spiritual mys-



tical religion. According to his own reckoning, Felgenhauer believed that the sixth thousand of the world and the advent of the Messiah connected with it were not far off. Persecuted in Germany by Catholics and Protestants alike, he sought an asylum in Amsterdam, and there formed an acquaintance with Manasseh ben Israel. Between these men and a third visionary, Peter Serrarius, the speedy coming of the Messianic time was often the subject of conversation. Felgenhauer then composed an original work (December, 1654), entitled, "Good News of the Messiah for Israel; that the redemption of Israel from all its sufferings, its freedom from captivity, and the glorious advent of the Messiah is nigh for the comfort of Israel, taken from the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, by a Christian who is expecting it with the Jews." Felgenhauer places the Jewish people very high, as the seed of Abraham, but considers the true believers of all nations as the spiritual seed of Abraham. Hence Jews and Christians should not despise, but should love one another. They should both unite in God. This union is near at hand. The bloody wars of nation against nation by sea and land over the whole world, which had not happened before to anything like the same extent, is a proof of this. As further signs he accounted the comets which appeared one after another in 1618, 1648 and 1652, and also the furious Polish War kindled by the Cossacks. Verses from the Bible, especially from Daniel and the Apocalypse, with daring interpretations, served him as proofs. Meanwhile Felgenhauer denied an earthly Messiah, nor did he allow the claim of Jesus to the title.

As this half-insane work was dedicated to Manasseh, he was obliged to answer it, which he did with great prudence (February 1st, 1655), for he gladly welcomed the pages favourable to the Jews and passed over the rest in silence. The good



news announced in the near future was the more welcome to his heart, as he himself, in spite of the afflictions which had lasted through many centuries, did not cease ardently to hope for better times.

“How gladly would I believe you, that the time is near in which God, who has so long been angry with us, will again comfort His people, and deliver it from more than Babylonian captivity, and from more than Egyptian bondage! What you allege as a sign of the commencement of the Messianic age from the announcement of the exaltation of Israel throughout the whole world, appears to me not only probable, but also bright and clear. A not inconsiderable number of these announcements (on the Christian side) for the consolation of Zion have been sent to me from Frankenberg and Mochinger of France and Hungary. And from England alone how many voices! They are like that small cloud in the time of the prophet Elijah, which suddenly extended so that it covered the whole of the heavens.”

Manasseh ben Israel had the courage to express without ambiguity Jewish expectations in opposition to the opinions held by Christian enthusiasts. They, for the most part, set before themselves the fifth monarchy, which they alleged was about to commence as a thousand years' reign, when Jesus would again appear and hand over the sovereign power to the saints. The Jews would, it is true, also have a share in this kingdom, they would assemble from all the ends of the earth, return to their ancestral home, and again build Jerusalem and the Temple. But this would be only an intermediate state, or properly, only a means that they might all—the whole Twelve Tribes—acknowledge Jesus as Messiah, and there would be one shepherd and one flock. Against this Manasseh ben Israel composed a treatise on the fifth kingdom of the prophecy of Daniel, ended April 25th, 1655, in order to set forth the independent glory of Israel. In this work, called “The Glorious Stone, or the Image of Nebuchadnezzar,” which he dedicated to Isaac Vossius, then in the service of the Queen of Sweden, he put forth all his learning to show that the history of the “four beasts” or great kingdoms in the successive sway

of the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, had already been verified, and therefore the coming of the fifth kingdom also was certain. But this was shown in Daniel plainly enough to be the kingdom of Israel, the people of God. In this Messianic kingdom all nations of the earth will have part, and they will be treated with kindness, but all authority will remain with Israel. Manasseh disfigured this simple thought by Kabbalistic triviality and sophistry. It is singular that a learned Christian not only accepted the dedication of this Jewish work, but the celebrated painter, Rembrandt, supplied four artistic engravings representing Nebuchadnezzar's, or Manasseh's, vision.

Manasseh had received a friendly invitation from the second Short Parliament assembled by Cromwell; but as it had been meanwhile dissolved he could not begin his journey until he was invited by the Protector himself. He seems to have sent on his son, Samuel ben Israel, in advance. This son was at once presented with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and of Medicine in consideration of his knowledge and natural gifts, and, according to custom, received the gold ring, the baretta, and the kiss of peace. It was no insignificant circumstance that this honour should be conferred upon a Jew by a university, strictly Christian in its conduct. The will of Cromwell appears to have been decisive in the matter. He also sent an invitation to Manasseh, but the journey was delayed till autumn. Not till the end of the Great Festival (25th to 31st October, 1655) did Manasseh undertake the voyage to London, which, though not so important, was, in his view, of the utmost consequence to the world. He was received in a friendly manner by Cromwell, and had a residence granted him. Among his companions was Jacob Sasportas, a learned man, and accustomed to intercourse with persons of high rank, who had

been formerly Rabbi in African cities. Other Jews also had accompanied him in the hope that the admission of the Jews would meet with no further difficulty. Some secret Jews from Spain and Portugal were already domiciled in London, among them being the rich and respected Fernandez Carvajal. But the matter did not admit of such speedy settlement. Manasseh delivered to the Protector, at an audience, a carefully composed petition or address. He had obtained full authority for the purpose from Jews in different countries of Europe, in order to urge the admission of Jews into England, not in his own name alone, but also in that of the whole Jewish nation. In his petition he skilfully adduced the argument and confirmed it with passages from the Bible and the Talmud, that power and authority are conferred by God according to His will; that God rewards and punishes even the rulers of the earth, and that this had been especially verified in Jewish history; that great monarchs who had troubled Israel had met with an unhappy end, as Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, Pompey, and others. On the other hand, benefactors of the Jewish nation had enjoyed happiness even here below, so that the word of God to Abraham had been literally fulfilled:—

“‘I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee.’ Hence I, one of the least among the Hebrews, since by experience I have found, that through God’s great bounty towards us, many considerable and eminent persons both for piety and power are moved with sincere and inward pity and compassion towards us, and do comfort us concerning the approaching Deliverance of Israel, could not but for myself, and in the behalf of my countrymen, make this my humble Address to your Highness, and beseech you for God’s sake that ye would, according to that piety and power wherein you are eminent beyond others, vouchsafe to grant that the great and glorious name of the Lord our God may be extolled, and solemnly worshipped and praised by us through all the bounds of this Commonwealth; and to grant us place in your country, that we may have our Synagogues, and free exercise of our religion. Pagans have of old . . . granted free liberty even to apostate Jews: . . . how much more then may we, that are not Apostate or runagate Jews, hope it from your Highness and your Christian Council, since you have so great knowledge



of, and adore the same one only God of Israel, together with us. . . . For our people did . . . . presage that . . . . the ancient hatred towards them would also be changed into goodwill: that those rigorous laws . . . . against so innocent a people would happily be repealed."

At the same time Manasseh ben Israel circulated through the press a declaration which served to explain the reasons for admitting the Jews, and also to meet objections and allay prejudices against their admission. All his reasons amounted to two—a mystical one and one of trade policy. The mystical one has already been repeatedly explained. His opinion coincided with that of many Christians, that the return of the Israelite people to their original fatherland was near at hand. According to his view the general dispersion of the Jews must precede this event:—

"Now we know how our nation is spread all about, and has its seat and dwelling in the most flourishing countries of the world, as well in America as in the other three parts thereof, except only in this considerable and mighty island. And therefore, before the Messiah come . . . . first we must have our seat here likewise."

The other reason was put in this form: that through the Jews the trade of England would make a great advance in exports and imports from all parts of the world. He developed this point of the advantage which the Jews might bestow at greater length, showing that on account of their fidelity and attachment to the countries which were hospitable and friendly to them they deserved to be treated with consideration. Besides, they ought to be especially esteemed on account of their nobility, and their purity of blood, among a people which attached importance to such advantages.

Manasseh ben Israel considered the commerce to which Jews were for the most part devoted, from a higher point of view. He had in view the foreign trade which the Portuguese Jews of Holland carried on with the money of various nations (exchange business), diamonds, cochineal, indigo, wine



and oil. These money transactions were not based on usury, on which the Jews of Germany and Poland relied, but the Amsterdam Jews embarked their capital in banks and satisfied themselves with five per cent. interest. The capital of the Portuguese Jews in Holland and Italy was very considerable, because the Marranos in Spain and Portugal also sent them ready money for use, so that they might be able to evade the avarice of the Inquisition. Hence Manasseh laid great weight on the advantages which England might expect from his enterprising countrymen. He thought that the chief occupation and, to a certain extent, the natural inclination of the Jews of all countries for trade, since their dispersion, was a work of Providence and a divine favour towards them, that by their accumulated treasures they might find favour in the eyes of rulers and nations. They were led to occupy themselves with commerce, because, through the insecurity of their existence, they could not possess any landed estates. Accordingly, they would be obliged to pursue trade till their return to their former land, for then "would there be no trader in the land of the Lord," as a prophet declares.

Manasseh ben Israel then took a survey over all the countries where the Jews in his time, or shortly before, had by means of their trade, attained to importance, and enumerated the persons who had risen to higher position by their services to states or rulers. However, much that he adduced was, when closely considered, not very brilliant, with the exception of the esteemed and secured position which the Jews occupied in Holland. Then he quoted examples, to prove what fidelity and devotedness the Jews had shown in ancient and modern times towards their protectors. He forcibly refuted the calumny that the Jews had been banished from Spain and Portugal on account of

their treacherous and faithless conduct. It was easy for him to show from Christian authors that this cruel treatment of the Jews, which culminated in their expulsion, was at once a crime and a folly, which wise rulers had most emphatically condemned. He also took occasion to defend his brethren against three other charges: usury, child murder, and proselytism. To wipe off the stain of usury, he made use of the justification which Simone Luzzato, a contemporary Jewish Italian author, had employed, that usury was not objectionable in itself, but only in its excess. But of greater weight was the fact which he adduced, that the Portuguese Jews whom he defended abhorred usury as much as many Christians, and that their large capital had not been obtained from it. Manasseh could repudiate with more vehemence the charge of murdering Christian children. Christians made the accusation, he thought, pretty much from the same motives that influenced the negroes of Guinea and Brazil, who especially tormented those scarcely saved from shipwreck, and those visited by misfortune in general, because they assumed that such persons were accursed of God.

“We that live not amongst the Black-moors and wild-men, but amongst the white and civilised people of the world, yet we find this an ordinary course, that men are very prone to hate and despise him that hath ill fortune; and on the other side, to make much of those whom fortune doth favour.”

Manasseh reminded the Christians that there had been a time when they too were charged by heathens with being murderers of children, sorcerers, and conjurers, and when they were punished by heathen emperors and officials. He was able to refer to a contemporary incident, showing how the innocence of Isaac Jeshurun, of Ragusa, a Jew repeatedly tortured for child murder, had come to light, and filled the judges with remorse. Manasseh refuted the accusation of the conversion of Chris-

tians to Judaism as untrue, and, at the same time, referred to the injunction of the Jewish law to dissuade rather than to attract proselytes.

“Now, because I believe, that with a good conscience I have discharged our nation of the Jews of those three slanders. . . . I may from these two qualities, of Profitableness and Fidelity conclude, that such a nation ought to be well entertained, and also beloved and protected generally of all. The more, considering they are called in the Sacred Scriptures the sons of God. . . . I could add a third (point), viz., of the Nobility of the Jews, but because that point is enough known amongst all Christians, as lately it has been shown . . . by that worthy Christian minister, Mr. Henry Jessey . . . and by Mr. Edw. Nicholas, Gentleman. Therefore I will here forbear and rest on the saying of Solomon . . . ‘Let another man’s mouth praise thee, and not thine own.’”

Cromwell was decidedly inclined to the admission of the Jews. He may have had in view the probability that the extensive trade and capital of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews, both open and concealed, might be brought to England, which at that time could not yet compete with Holland. He was also animated by the great idea of the unconditional toleration of all religions, and even thought of granting religious freedom to the intensely hated, feared, and hence persecuted Catholics. Therefore he acceded to the wish of the Jews to open an asylum to them in England. But he was most influenced by a religious desire to win over the Jews to Christianity by friendly treatment. He thought that Christianity, as it was preached in England by the Independents, without idolatry and superstition, must eventually captivate the Jews, who had been hitherto deterred from Christianity.

Cromwell and Manasseh ben Israel agreed together as to the admission of the Jews into England, with a visionary hope of a Messianic period in the back ground. The Kabbalistic Rabbi thought that in consequence of the settlement of the Jews in the British island, the Messianic redemption would commence, and the Puritanic Protector believed that the Jews would flock in a mass to Christianity, and that then the time would come of one shepherd and



one flock. To dispose the people favourably towards the Jews, Cromwell employed his two most zealous Independents, the clergyman, Hugh Peters, his secretary, and Harry Marten, the fiery member of the state council, to labour at the task.

At last the time came to bring the question of the admission of the Jews seriously before the council. For, as they had been banished in the year 1290 in pursuance of a decree enacting that they should never return, it was questionable whether the decree was not still in force. Therefore Cromwell assembled a commission at Whitehall (December 4th, 1655), finally to decide the issue. The commission was composed of Lord Chief Justice Glynn, Lord Chief Baron Steel, and seven citizens, including the Lord Mayor, the two sheriffs of London, an alderman, and the Recorder of the City, and fourteen eminent clergymen of different towns. Cromwell mentioned two subjects for discussion; whether it was lawful to admit the Jews again to England, and then, in case it was not opposed to the law, under what conditions the admission should take place. Manasseh had formulated his proposal under seven heads; that they should be admitted and protected against violence; that they should be granted synagogues, the free exercise of religion, and places of burial; that they should enjoy freedom of trade, and should settle their disputes among themselves by Rabbis and leaders; and that all former laws hostile to the Jews should be repealed for their greater security. On admission, every Jew should take an oath of fidelity to the realm.

There was great excitement in London during the discussion on the admission of the Jews, and popular feeling was much divided. Blind hatred against the crucifiers of the Son of God, and blind love for the people of God, fear of the competition of the Jews in trade, and hope of gaining



the precedence from the Dutch and Spaniards by their means, prejudiced ideas that they crucified Christian children, clipped coin, or wished to make all the English people Jews—all these conflicting feelings disturbed the judgment for and against them. Cromwell's followers, and the Republicans in general, were for the admission; Royalists and Papists, therefore, who were secretly or openly his enemies, were opposed to the proposal. The people crowded to the hall where the Jewish question was publicly discussed. At the very beginning the representatives of the law declared that no ancient law excluded the Jews from England, for their banishment was enacted merely by the king, without the consent of Parliament. The representatives of the city remained silent; the most violent were the clergy, who could not rid themselves of their hatred against the Jews, derived from the gospels and their theological literature. Cromwell, who most earnestly wished to obtain a favourable result, therefore added three clergymen, from whom he expected a vote favourable to the Jews, among whom was Hugh Peters. The question was not brought to a decision in three sittings. Cromwell therefore ordered a final discussion (December 18th, 1655), at which he presided. The majority of the clergy were even on this day against the admission of the Jews, and the minority only favoured their admission with due precautions. Cromwell, dissatisfied with the course of the discussion, first had the theological objections refuted by Manasseh ben Israel, and then expressed himself with much warmth, and reprimanded the clergy. He said he had hoped to receive from them enlightenment for his conscience, instead of which they had made the question still more obscure. The main strength of his arguments was: The pure (Puritanical) gospel must be preached to the Jews, to win them to the church. "But can we preach to them, if we will not

tolerate them among us?" Cromwell thereupon closed the discussion, and resolved to decide the matter according to his own judgment.

He had not only the opposition of the fanatical clergy to contend against, but also that of the multitude, who shared their prejudiced feeling. The enemies of the Jews made every effort to win over the people against their admission. They spread the report that the Jews came in order to get possession by purchase of the library of the University of Oxford, and, if possible, to turn St. Paul's into a synagogue. They sought to bring Cromwell's friendship for the Jews under suspicion, and circulated the report that an embassy had come to England from Asia and Prague to institute an inquiry whether Cromwell was not the expected Messiah of the Jews. A clerical pamphleteer, named William Prynne, stirred up a most fanatical excitement against the Jews. He composed a venomous work, "A short Demurrer," in which he again raked up all false accusations against them of counterfeit coining, and the crucifixion of Christian children, and briefly summarised the anti-Jewish decrees of the thirteenth century, so as to make the name of Jew hated. From other quarters, also, various publications appeared against them. John Hoornbeek, a Dutchman, composed a complete book on the conversion of the Jews, in which he pretended to be their friend, but actually sought to asperse them. John Dury, an Englishman residing at the time at Cassel, was also resolved to make his voice heard about the Jews; he weighed arguments for and against their admission, and at last inclined to the view that it was a serious matter to permit the Jews to enter England. His work was printed and published. Probably at Cromwell's suggestion, Thomas Collier wrote a refutation of Prynne's charges, which he dedicated to the Protector. He justified in it even the crucifixion of

Jesus by the Jews, and concluded his work with a passage couched in the taste of that time.

“Oh, let us respect them; let us wait for that glorious day which will make them the head of the nations. Oh, the time is at hand when every one shall think himself happy that can but lay hold of the skirt of a Jew. Our salvation came from them! Our Jesus was of them! We are gotten into their promises and privileges! The natural branches were cut off, that we might be grafted on! Oh, let us not be high-minded, but fear. Let us not, for God’s sake, be unmerciful to them! No! let it be enough if we have all their [spiritual] riches.”

While the admission of the Jews met with so many difficulties in England, the Dutch Government was by no means pleased with Manasseh ben Israel’s efforts to bring it to pass. They doubtless feared that the Amsterdam Jews would remove to England with all their capital. Manasseh was obliged, on this account, to pacify the Dutch Ambassador at an interview, and to assure him that his exertions concerned not the Dutch Jews, but the Marranos who were watched with argus eyes in Spain and Portugal, for whom he wished to provide an asylum. Manasseh had already waited six months in London to obtain from Cromwell a favourable decision, but without success. The Protector found no leisure for attending to the Jewish question, his energies were devoted to the task of obtaining the funds necessary for the government of the State and foreign wars, which one Parliament after another refused, and to frustrate the Royalist conspiracy against his life. Manasseh’s companions, who had given up all hopes of success, therefore left London; others who, having fled from the Pyrenean Peninsula, were on their way thither, turned back and settled in Italy or Geneva.

Meanwhile the friends of the Jews were unwearyed, and hoped still to produce a change of mind in the people. One of “the saints” published a small work (April, 1656), in which he briefly summarised the proceedings at the dis-



cussion on the admission of the Jews, and then added:—

“What shall be the issue of this, the most high God knoweth; Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel still remains in London, desiring a favourable answer to his proposals; and not receiving it, he hath desired, that if they may not be granted, he may have a favourable dismissal, and return home. But other great affairs being now in hand, and this being business of very great concernment, no absolute answer is yet returned to him.”

In order to give a thorough refutation of all the charges to which the enemies of the Jews and the opponents of toleration still clung, a person of high rank, who stood near the government about this time, induced Manasseh ben Israel to publish a brief but comprehensive work, in defence of the Jews. In the form of a letter he collected all the grounds of accusation. These included the current slanders, the use of the blood of Christians at the Passover, curses upon Christians and blasphemy against the God of the Christians in the Jewish prayers, and lastly, the idolatrous reverence alleged to be shown for the Torah-scrolls. The defence of the Jews, which Manasseh ben Israel composed in reply (April 10th), and which was soon afterwards circulated through the press, is perhaps the best work that proceeded from his pen. It is dictated by a warm heart, and is therefore convincing; learned matter, it is true, was not wanting in it, but the learning is subordinate to the main object. In the composition of this defence Manasseh must have had peculiar feelings. He had come to England as interpreter or representative of the people of God in order to win the sympathy of Christians in some measure by a forced march, and pave the way for the lordship of Israel over the world, and now his people was, so to say, placed at the bar, and he had to defend them. Hence the tone of this work is not aggressive and triumphant, but, on the contrary, plaintive. He affirmed that never did anything produce a deeper



impression on his mind than the letter addressed to him with the list of anti-Jewish charges.

"It reflects upon the credit of a nation, which amongst so many calumnies, so manifest (and therefore shameful) I dare to pronounce innocent. And in the first place, I cannot but weep bitterly, and with much anguish of soul lament, that strange and horrid accusation of some Christians against the dispersed and afflicted Jews that dwell among them, when they say (what I tremble to write) that the Jews are wont to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, fermenting it with the blood of some Christians whom they have for that purpose killed."

To this false charge so often made, among others by Prynne, the greatest part of his defence is devoted, and it is indeed striking. He rightly referred the belief in it to false witnesses or to the confession of accused persons under torture. The innocence of the accused was often brought to light, but too late, for they had already been executed. Manasseh confirmed this by a delightful story. The physician of a Portuguese count had been charged by the Inquisition as a Judaizing Christian. In vain did the count pledge himself for his orthodoxy, he was nevertheless tortured, and himself confessed that he was a Judaizing sinner. Subsequently the count, pretending serious illness, had the Inquisitor summoned to him, and in his house, with the doors closed, he commanded him in a threatening tone to confess in writing that he was a Jew. The Inquisitor refused; then a servant brought in a red-hot helmet to put upon his head. Thereupon the Inquisitor confessed everything demanded by the count, who took this opportunity of reproaching him with his cruelty and inhumanity.

Manasseh ben Israel superfluously affirmed with a solemn oath the absolute falsehood of the oft-repeated charges as to the use of Christians' blood.

After meeting all the other accusations against the Jews, he concludes his defence with a fine prayer and an address to England:

"And to the highly honoured nation of England I make my most humble request, that they would read over my arguments impartially,

without prejudice and devoid of all passion, effectually recommending me to their grace and favour, and earnestly beseeching God that He would be pleased to hasten the time promised by Zephaniah, wherein we shall all serve him with one consent, after the same manner, and shall be all of the same judgment; that as his name is one, so his fear may be also one, and that we may all see the goodness of the Lord (blessed for ever!) and the consolations of Zion."

This last work of Manasseh ben Israel produced in England the favourable effect desired. Though Cromwell, amidst the increasing difficulties of his government, could not fully carry out the admission of the Jews, he still made a beginning towards it. He dismissed Manasseh with honourable distinctions, and granted him a yearly allowance of one hundred pounds (February 20th, 1657) out of the public treasury. The Jews were not, indeed, admitted in triumph through the great portal, but they were let in by Cromwell through a back door, and got a firm footing in the house. This was in consequence of an indictment brought against an immigrant Marrano merchant, Antonio Nobles, that he, a Portuguese Papist, had illegally engaged in business pursuits in England, but he was acquitted by the Protector on the ground that he was not a Catholic, but a Jew. Thus the residence of such Jews was suffered; they could therefore drop the mask of Catholicism. Two respected Marranos, Simon de Caverer and Fernandez (Isaac) Carvajal, in fact, received Cromwell's permission to open a special burial-ground for the Sephardic Jews settled in London (1657). In consequence of this permission it was no longer necessary, as heretofore, that they should make a show of attending church or of having their newly-born children baptised. But they occupied an anomalous position. Being strangers, and on account of their insignificant numbers, they lived not exactly on sufferance, but were ignored. Thus Manasseh ben Israel's endeavours were not entirely in vain. He did not draw the pension awarded him, nor did he live to witness the coming

up of the seed scattered by him, for on the way home he died, at Middelburg, probably broken down by exertions and the disappointment of his hopes, even before he had reached his friends (Nov., 1657). His body was afterwards brought to Amsterdam, and an honourable epitaph was put over his grave. But the activity displayed by him with so much zeal, even if the outcome of Messianic delusions, bore fruit, because it was honourably intended. Before he had been dead ten years, many Jews were gradually admitted into England by the monarchy which succeeded the Republic. A community was assembled which soon became organised, a room was fitted up in King Street as a synagogue, and Jacob Sasportas, the outcast from Africa, who had been a companion of Manasseh ben Israel, was chosen as Rabbi. The branch community of London took as its model that of Amsterdam. From this second stronghold, now occupied by the Portuguese Jews, afterwards proceeded the agitation for popular freedom and the liberation of the Jews.

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## CHAPTER III.

### THE SCEPTICS.

Condition of Judaism—Complete Triumph of the Kabbala—The Disciples of Isaac Lurya—Vital Calabrese, Abraham de Herrera and Isaiah Hurwitz—Immanuel Aboab—Uriel da Costa ; his career and death—Leon Modena, his character and his writings—Deborah Ascarelli and Sarah Copia Sullam, Jewish Authoresses—Leon Modena's veiled Scepticism—The Travels and Influence of Joseph Delmedigo—The Writings of Simon Luzzatto.

1620—1660 C.E.

JUDAISM, then in its three thousandth year, was like a rich kernel, so covered and concealed by crusts deposited one upon another, and by extraneous matter, that only very few could recognise its true character. The Sinaitic and prophetic kernel of thought had long been covered over with the threefold layer of Sopheric, Mishnaitic, and Talmudical explanations and restrictions. Over these, in the course of centuries, new layers had been formed from the time of the Gaonic, Spanish, French, German and Polish schools, and these layers and strata were enclosed by an unsightly growth of fungus forms, a mouldy coating of the Kabbala, which settling gradually in the gaps and chinks, grew and ramified. All these new forms had already the authority of age in their favour, and were considered inviolable. People no longer asked what was taught in the fundamental Sinaitic law, on which the prophets laid so much weight; they scarcely regarded what the Talmud decided to be essential or non-essential, but the new Rabbinical authorities—Joseph Karo



and Moses Isserles—as the highest authorities, decided what was Judaism. There also accrued superadditions from the Polish schools, and lastly the Kabbalistic dreams of Isaac Lurya. These parasitic plants flourished at this time over the whole religious life of the Jews. Almost all Rabbis and leaders of Jewish communities, whether in small Polish towns or in cultivated Amsterdam, the Chacham, Isaac Aboab de Fonseca, as well as Isaiah Hurwitz, who travelled to Palestine, were ensnared by the Kabbala. This study, which from the fourteenth century had kept step with the progress of science, had since Isaac Lurya's death made such giant strides, or rather committed such gigantic ravages, that nothing could keep it in check. Lurya's wild notions of the origin of the soul, transmigration of souls, union of souls, the work of redemption, and wonder-working, attracted after his death more and more adherents into his magic circle, clouding their minds and narrowing their sympathies.

Lurya's disciples, the lion's young ones, as they boastfully called themselves, proceeded systematically with a view to effect conversion, circulated most absurd stories about their marvellous deeds, gave people to understand that their master's spirit had come upon them, and shrouded themselves in clouds of mystery, in order to attract greater attention. Chayim Vital Calabrese had most signalled himself, and with his juggleries deluded the credulous people in Palestine and the neighbouring countries (1572-1620) till his death. He claimed to be the Ephraimitic Messiah, and therefore assumed a sort of authority over his fellow-disciples. In Jerusalem, where he resided for several years, Vital preached and had visions, but did not meet with the recognition he expected. Only women said they had seen a pillar of fire or the prophet Elijah hovering over Vital.

On his return to Safet, Vital visited his master's grave, carried on exorcism of spirits and other mystic follies, but did not live on good terms with his own son-in-law, Gedaliah Levi, of whom he was jealous. He therefore settled for a time at Damascus (1594-1620), continued his mystifications there, affected very great personal importance, as if the salvation of the world rested on his shoulders, and preached the speedy appearance of the Messiah, and of his mission to forward it. Jesus and Mahomet would, repenting their errors, lay their crowns at his feet. He was, indeed, ridiculed on account of his wild proceedings, and was declared to be a false prophet, for which he took vengeance on his detractors with gross slanders.

In old age he still maintained mystical claims, saying that he had hitherto been forbidden to reveal his visions, but that this prohibition having been withdrawn, he could now declare that some souls wandering in bodily life would be united to him—of course, subordinate to him—in order to bring about the redemption. One of these souls was summoned for the purpose from a foreign country. This was a bait to attract enthusiasts for the Kabbala to him, and thus secure a following. And, indeed, enthusiasts hastened from Italy, Germany, Poland, and other countries to undertake a Messianic part in Vital's company. The written notes left by Lurya gave rise to further delusion. Vital asserted that he alone was in possession of them, and issued a decree of the college at Safet, by which no one was authorised to make communications openly about Lurya's Kabbala. The Kabbalists only became more anxious to possess this supposed incomparable treasure. Chayim Vital's brother, Moses Vital, took advantage of this eagerness to make a good business of it. During an illness of his brother's, he caused the writings found at his house to be copied, and sold them at a

high price. After his recovery, Chayim Vital affirmed that the writings stolen from him were not the true ones; these he would never publish. He is said to have directed in his last will, that they should be laid with him in the grave. Nevertheless, his son, Samuel Vital, after his father's death, circulated Luryan Kabbalistic revelations, and published his dreams and visions in a work of his own. An immigrant Marrano from Portugal, who had devoted himself to the Kabbala, maintained that he found the best collection in Vital's grave.

After this time a regular search was made after the Kabbala of Lurya and Vital. Whoever was in possession of copies, and offered them for sale or publication, found ready purchasers. Messengers were employed to give this delusion the greatest currency among the communities. Israel Saruk, or Sarug, a German, one of Lurya's disciples, introduced the Luryan Kabbala into Italy, gained many adherents there, and also much money for himself. His account of the marvellous doings of his master awakened opposition in only very few. From Italy he betook himself to Holland, and there gained a disciple who knew how to give the Kabbalistic frenzy a philosophic complexion. Alonzo, or Abraham, de Herrera (died 1639), a descendant of the Spanish General and Viceroy of Naples, was introduced by Saruk to the shallows of the Luryan Kabbala. As during the greatest part of his life he had lived as a Christian, he was more familiar with non-Jewish philosophy than with Jewish literature; therefore it was easy to deceive him and to induce him to take dross for gold. He felt indeed clearly that the Kabbala of Lurya betrayed resemblances to Neo-Platonic philosophy, but this disturbed de Herrera little, or, rather it confirmed the Kabbalistic teaching, and he endeavoured to explain one by the other.

The thread of comparison and intelligent thought



was broken off for him ; and he used idle talk and rambling expressions without sense or significance. Abraham de Herrera, who, as has been stated, did not become a Jew till at a ripe age, could not learn Hebrew, and hence had his two Hebrew works, "God's House" and the "Gate of Heaven," translated by the Amsterdam preacher, Isaac Aboab, from Spanish into Hebrew. He also, in his last will, set apart a considerable sum of his money for the publication of them through the press. Who knows what great service the author and translator thought they had rendered to Judaism ! But by the outward splendour which these works impart to the Kabbala they really blinded the superficial minds of the average Portuguese Jews, who, in spite of their knowledge of classical literature and European culture, abandoned themselves to the delusions of the Kabbala. Manasseh ben Israel and all his older and younger contemporaries in Holland paid homage to mysticism, and had no doubt of its truth and divinity.

In Germany and Poland two men, half Polish and half German, brought the Lurian Kabbala into high estimation : Isaiah Hurwitz (Sheloh), called the Holy, and Napthali Frankfurter, to whom we might perhaps add the credulous Solomon, or Shlomel of Moravia, who glorified the silliest stories of the wonders performed by Isaac Lurya, Vital and their circle in letters sent to Germany and Poland, which were eagerly read and circulated.

Meanwhile in this thick unsightly crust, which had overspread the Kabbala, some rifts and chinks appeared, which indicated a flaw. Here and there were found men of unprejudiced judgment, who felt and expressed their doubts as to the truth of Judaism in its later Rabbinical and Kabbalistic form. Many went still further, and included also the Talmudical interpretation. Others advanced from doubt to certainty, and proceeded more or less



openly against existing Judaism. Such inquirers were not of course to be met with among the German and Polish Jews, and also not among the Asiatics; these considered every letter in the Talmud and Zohar, every law in the Code (Shulchan Aruch) as the inviolable word of God. The doubters were only in the Italian and Portuguese communities, which had relations with educated and enlightened circles. A pious adherent of tradition, Imanuel Aboab, of Portuguese origin, who had long resided in Italy, felt called upon by this circumstance to compose a defence of the exposition given by the Talmud and the Rabbis (Nomologia, composed 1616-1625), showing an unbroken chain of the exponents of true tradition down to his own time, a well-meant, but not very convincing work. The perplexed Kabbalist, Naphtali Frankfurter, complained of some contemporaries who ridiculed the Talmud. Three or four gifted investigators brought more or less openly to light the sense of scepticism that was working beneath the surface. These three men, differing in character, mode of life, and position, were Uriel Acosta, Judah Leo Modena, and Joseph Delmedigo; we may perhaps add Simone Luzzato to the list. They endeavoured to lay bare the disadvantages and weaknesses of existing Judaism; but not one of them was able to suggest or carry out a means of cure.

Uriel da Costa (Gabriel Acosta, born about 1590, died April, 1640) was an original character, whose inward mental unrest and external course of life could not but bring him into conflict with Judaism as a matter of course. He was descended from a Portuguese Marrano family at Oporto, whose members had been made sincere believers in Christ by the terrors of the Inquisition. His father at least, who belonged to the higher classes in Portugal, had become a strict Catholic. Young

Gabriel learnt ecclesiasticism and the accomplishments of a cavalier from his father, was, like him, a good rider, and entered upon a course of education, limited indeed but sufficient for that time. He followed the course of life which alone remained open for young Portuguese of the upper middle class, by means of which the highly gifted could rise to distinction, and to a certain equality with the nobility. He was prepared for the law, a study which might pave the way to the second rank—the clerical. In his youth, the Jesuit orders had exerted a powerful influence over men's minds, and their methods of exciting the imagination, and of subduing the intellect by depicting everlasting damnation and the punishments of hell, had been already proved effectual. Nothing but punctilious, mechanical worship and continual confession could overcome the terrors of hell.

Gabriel da Costa, in spite of his punctilious ecclesiasticism, did not feel quieted in his conscience; the daily mechanical exercises failed in their effects on his mind, and continual confession to obtain absolution from the lips of the priest, affected him less as he became more mature. Something of the refining Jewish spirit remained in his nature, and shook the strongly built Catholic system of belief to its depths. The more that he plunged into the Catholic Jesuitic teaching, the more did doubts trouble him and disturb his conscience. However, he accepted a semi-spiritual office as chief treasurer to a collegiate church about 1615. To end his doubts, he investigated the oldest records of Holy Scripture. The prophets should solve the enigma for him—the riddles which the Roman Catholic Church doctrines daily presented to him. The fresh spirit which breathed from out of the Holy Scripture of the Old Testament, although in disfigured Latin guise, brought unwonted repose to his mind. The doctrines of Judaism appeared the more cer-

tain, as, strictly speaking, they were also recognised by the New Testament and the Church, while those of Catholicism were rejected; in the one case there was unanimity, in the other contradiction. Da Costa formed the resolution to forsake Catholicism and return to Judaism. Being of an active, violent and passionate temperament, he sought to carry his resolution into effect quickly. With great caution he communicated his intention to his mother and brothers—his father was already dead—and they also resolved to expose themselves to the danger of a secret removal, to leave their house and the Court, give up a respected position in society, and exchange the certain present for the uncertain future. In spite of the Argus-eyed espionage of the Inquisition and the secular authorities against Marranos, the Da Costa family succeeded in gaining a vessel and escaping to Amsterdam (about 1617-18). Gabriel da Costa and his brothers were admitted to the covenant of Abraham, and Gabriel changed his first name to Uriel.

Of a hot-blooded nature, an enthusiast whose imagination overpowered his judgment or reduced it to inactivity, Uriel da Costa had formed for himself an ideal of Judaism which he expected to meet with in Amsterdam, but which had never existed. He thought to see the Biblical conditions, drawn from pure Pentateuchal laws, realised in the young Amsterdam community, and to find an elevation of mind which would at once clear up the puzzles that the Catholic Church could not solve for him. What the Catholic confessors could not offer him he thought he would be able to obtain from the Rabbis of Amsterdam. Da Costa had built religious and dogmatic castles in the air, and was annoyed not to meet with them in the world of reality. He soon found that the religious life of the Amsterdam community and its established laws did



not agree with the Mosaic or Pentateuchal precepts, but were often opposed to them. As he had made great sacrifices for his convictions, he thought he had a right to express his opinion freely, and point to the gap which existed between Biblical and Rabbinical Judaism. He was deeply wounded, embittered and irritated, and allowed himself to be completely overpowered by his feelings. He did not stop at mere words, but regulated his conduct accordingly, openly set himself above religious usages, and thought by so doing to render a meritorious service to God in opposing the ordinances of the "Pharisees" (as he, in the language of the Church, called the Rabbis). As a natural consequence he thereby brought upon himself unpleasantnesses which were destined to end tragically. Should the Amsterdam Jews, who had suffered so much for their religion, quietly see one of their members openly assail and ridicule Judaism, which had become so dear to them? Those born and brought up in the land of the Inquisition had no idea of toleration and indulgence for the conviction of others. The Rabbis, perhaps Isaac Uziel and Joseph Pardo, threatened Da Costa with excommunication or expulsion from the religious community and all relations with it, if he persisted in transgressing the religious ordinances of Judaism. This opposition only served to increase Da Costa's violent discontent; he was ill-content to have purchased new fetters for himself by the sacrifices he had made. He continued to set himself above and beyond existing rules, and was eventually excommunicated. Uriel's relatives, who had also adopted Judaism with him, avoided him, and spoke not a word to him. Thus Da Costa stood alone in the midst of a great city. Separated from his race, friends, and relatives, alone amongst the Christian inhabitants of Amsterdam, whose language he had not yet learnt, without



connections, and thrown upon himself, he fell more and more into subtle speculation. Through excessive irritation he resolved to publish a work hostile to existing Judaism, and which brought out the glaring contrast between it and the Bible. As irrefragable proof, he intended to make a special point of alleging that the former recognised only bodily punishments and rewards, and taught nothing as to the immortality of the soul. But, meanwhile, he came upon the discovery that the Bible itself observed silence about a purely spiritual future life, and did not bring within the circle of religion the idea of a soul separated from the body. In short, his investigations led him away not only from Catholicism and Rabbinical Judaism, but also from the Bible itself. It is not known how it became circulated that the excommunicated Da Costa intended to give public offence, but he was anticipated. Samuel da Silva, a Jewish physician, in 1623, published a work in the Portuguese language, entitled "A Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul, in order to confute the Ignorance of a certain Opponent, who in Delusion affirms many Errors." In the course of the work the author plainly named Uriel, and described him as "blind and incapable." Da Costa thought his opponents, especially the Rabbis, had hired Silva's pen to attack him. Hence he hastened to publish his work also in Portuguese (1624-1625), entitled "An Examination of the Pharisaic Traditions compared with the written Laws, and Reply to the false Slanders of Samuel da Silva." The fact of his calling his opponent a slanderer shows his mental confusion, for he actually asserted what Da Silva had alleged against him, that the soul is not immortal. As he had now unequivocally declared his breach with Judaism, he had to take the consequences. Before this he was openly scorned by young people in the street as excommunicated, a heretic, and Epicurean (in

the Talmudical sense); he was pelted with stones, disturbed and annoyed in his own house (as he thought, at the instigation of the Rabbis). Now, after the appearance of his work the official representatives of the Amsterdam community went to the magistrates with a complaint that, by denying the immortality of the soul, he had attacked not only the teaching of Judaism, but also of Christianity, and that he had published errors. Da Costa was thereupon arrested, kept for several days in prison, at last fined 300 gulden, and his work condemned to the flames. The freest State of that time believed it had the right to keep watch over and limit freedom of thought and writing, though it kindled no burning piles for the bodies of men. However, Da Costa's brethren in race could not have persecuted him very severely, for he was able to bear this treatment during the long space of fifteen years. Only the loneliness was a heavy burden to him; he could not endure to be avoided by his family as one infected with the plague. Da Costa was not a strong-minded man, a thinker of the first order, who could live happily in his world of ideas as in boundless space, unconcerned about the outer world, and glad of his solitary freedom; he could not do without the world. He had deposited his capital with one of his brothers, and he thought it would be endangered if he continued the war against the community. He thought of bringing a wife home, which was impossible for him so long as he was excommunicated. Hence he at last yielded to the urgency of his relatives to become reconciled with the community. He was willing, as he said, "to be an ape among apes." He confessed Judaism with his lips just at the time when he had in his heart thoroughly fallen away from it.

Da Costa, through his philosophical inquiries, had come upon a new discovery. Judaism itself,

at least in its pure Biblical form, could not be of divine origin, because it contradicted nature in many points, and God, as the Creator of nature, could not contradict Himself in revelation. Hence, He cannot command or forbid a principle by the Law, if He has implanted in nature an opposing principle. This was the first step to the deistic tendency then emerging in France and the Netherlands, which acknowledged God only on one side, namely, in Nature, but not on all sides, in the moral law, in religious and political development. Da Costa's theory supposed a religion of nature inborn in man, which produced and built up the moral law from itself, and culminated in the love of members of a family to one another. The best of what there is in Judaism and other religions resting on revelation is borrowed from the religion of nature. The one recognises only love and union; the others, on the contrary, arm parents and children against one another on account of the faith. This theory was the suggestion of his bitterness, because his relatives avoided him, and, in general, showed him but little consideration. Da Costa appears to have put forward as the religion of nature what the Talmud calls the Noachian Commandments.

In spite of his complete falling away from Judaism, he however resolved, as he himself states, on the intervention of his nephew, and after he had passed fifteen years in excommunication (about 1618-1633), to alter his course of life and proceedings, make a confession, or rather put his signature to such a document, an act of what he himself describes as thorough-going hypocrisy, designed to purchase repose and comfort in life, at the cost of his convictions. But his passionate nature robbed him of both. He could not impose renunciation upon himself to satisfy the religious usages of Judaism, but transgressed them immediately after his penitent confession. He was detected by one of his relatives,



which so embittered all, especially the nephew who had brought about the reconciliation, that they persecuted him even more relentlessly than those who were less nearly connected with him. They again renounced all intimacy with him, prevented his marriage with his betrothed, and are said to have also injured him in his property. Through his passionate hatred to Judaism, which he had confessed with his lips, he committed a folly which exposed his true sentiments. Two Christians, an Italian and a Spaniard, had come from London to Amsterdam to attach themselves to Judaism. When they went to consult on the subject Uriel da Costa, he gave them a frightful picture of the Jewish form of religion, warned them against laying a heavy yoke on their necks, and advised them to continue in their own faith. Contrary to promise, the two Christians betrayed Da Costa's remarks on Judaism to the leaders of the community. Hence the war between them and him broke out afresh. The Rabbis summoned him for the second time before their tribunal, set before him his religious transgressions, and declared that he should not escape a second severe excommunication unless he was willing to submit to a solemn penance in public. More from a sense of honour than from conviction he refused this penance, and so was a second time laid under the ban, and indeed under a much more severe one than the first, in which condition he continued for another seven years. During this time he was treated by the members of the community with contempt, and even spat upon. His brothers and nephews behaved with the greatest severity towards him, because they thought by that means to force him to repentance. They reckoned on his helplessness and weakness; and they had not reckoned amiss.

Da Costa meanwhile was getting old, had become enfeebled by conflicts and excitement, and longed



for repose. In the way of justice, which he endeavoured to win from the Amsterdam authorities, he could obtain nothing, because he could not put his complaints into a tangible form; he consented, therefore, to everything that was demanded of him for his humiliation. His public penance was to be a very severe one. There was, indeed, no definite prescription on the subject in the Religious Codes; nay, properly speaking, there was no legally public penance, the sinner was not to confess aloud his transgressions against religion, but in silence to God. Judaism, from its origin, had an objection to confessions and the murmurs of a sinner's acknowledgment. But for this very reason it remained for the College of Rabbis to appoint a form of penance. The Amsterdam Rabbis, and the presidency which consisted of Marranos, adopted for the purpose the gloomy form of the tribunal of the Inquisition.

As soon as Da Costa had consented to this humiliation, he was led into one of the synagogues, which was full of men and women. There was to be a sort of auto-da-fé, and the greatest possible publicity was given to his penance because the scandal was public. He had to ascend a raised stage and read out his confession of sins; that he had desecrated the Sabbath, violated the laws with regard to food, denied articles of faith, and advised persons not to adopt Judaism. He solemnly declared that he resolved to be no longer guilty of such offences, but to live as a true Jew. Then, on a whisper from the first Rabbi, probably Saul Morteira, he went to a corner of the synagogue, stripped as far as the girdle, after which he received thirty-nine stripes with a scourge. Then he was obliged to sit on the ground, after which the ban was removed. Not yet having satisfied the authorities, he had to stretch himself out on the threshold of the synagogue, that those present

might step over him. It was certainly an excessive penance which was imposed upon him, not from a desire of persecution or vengeance, but from religious scrupulousness and mimicry of Catholic forms. No wonder that the disgrace and humiliation he endured deeply wounded Da Costa, who had undergone the punishment, not from inward repentance, but from exhaustion in the conflict. The public disgrace had shaken his whole being, and suggested thoughts of revenge. Instead of complaining of the Rabbis as the instruments of historical events, he hated them with a glowing feeling of revenge as the refuse of mankind, and as if they had thought of nothing but deception, lying and wickedness. His wounded sense of honour and heated imagination saw in all Jews of the Amsterdam community, perhaps in all the Jews on the earth's surface, his personal and venomous foes, and in Judaism an institution to stir up men to hatred and persecution of one another. Thinking that he was surrounded by bitter enemies, and feeling too weak for a fresh conflict, he resolved to die, but at the same time to take vengeance on his chief persecutor, his brother (or cousin). In order to excite the sympathy of contemporaries and posterity, he wrote his autobiography and confession, which, however, contains no new thoughts, only bitterness and furious attacks against the Jews, intermingled with fresh aspersions against them in the eyes of Christians; that even at this time they would have crucified Jesus, and that the State ought not to grant them freedom of religious profession. This document, drawn up amidst preparations for death, breathed nothing but revenge against his enemies. After he had finished his impassioned testament, he loaded two pistols, and fired one at his relative, who was passing his house. He missed his aim, so he shut the door of his room and killed himself with the other weapon (April, 1640).

On opening his residence after the report of the shot, they found his autobiography, "An Example of Human Life," on his table, in which he brought Jews and Judaism to the bar, and with pathetic sentences described them as his excited imagination in the last hour suggested. Both by this act and legacy Da Costa showed that he suffered himself to be more overpowered by his feelings than guided by reason. He was neither a theoretic thinker nor a practically wise man, nor was his a manly character. As he had in general no finished intellectual method, but denied what was at hand as false and bad because it was opposed to his way of thinking, he left no lasting impression behind him. His Jewish contemporaries persisted in stubborn silence about him, as if they wished his memory to fall into oblivion. He acted like a boy who, in an old decaying building, breaks the windows and thus creates a draught.

The second mole-like thinker of this time, Leo (Judah) ben Isaac Modena (born 1571, died 1649), was of another stamp, and was reared in different surroundings. Leo Modena was descended from a cultivated family which migrated to Modena, in Italy, on the expulsion of the Jews from France, and whose ancestors, from their lack of intellectual clearness, despite their education fostered every kind of superstition and fanciful ideas.

Leo Modena possessed this family peculiarity in a high degree. He was a marvellous child. In his third year he could read an extract from the prophets; in his tenth, he delivered a sort of sermon; in his thirteenth, he wrote a clever dialogue on the question of the lawfulness of playing with cards and dice, and composed an elegy on the death of the teacher of his youth, Moses Basula, in Hebrew and Italian verses, which read smoothly—a mere trifle, to be sure, but which at a riper age pleased him so well that he had



it printed. But, from a marvellous child, he did not develop into a marvellous man, nor a personage of prominence or distinction. Modena became, however, an astonishing possessor of varied knowledge. As he pursued all sorts of occupations to support himself, viz., those of preacher, teacher of Jews and Christians, reader of prayers, interpreter, writer, editor, bookseller, critic, merchant, Rabbi, musician, match-maker, and manufacturer of amulets, without ever attaining to a fixed position, so he also studied many departments of knowledge without specially distinguishing himself in any single one. He grasped the whole of Biblical, Talmudic, and Rabbinical literature, was well read in Christian theological works, understood something of philosophy and physics, was able to write Hebrew and Italian verses—in short, he had read everything accessible through the medium of three languages, Hebrew, Latin, and Italian. He remembered what he read, for he possessed an excellent memory, invented a method of sharpening it still more, and wrote a book on this subject. But Leo Modena had no delight and no enjoyment either in knowledge or poetry; both had no value for him except so far as they brought bread. He preached, wrote books and verses, translated and commented, all to earn money, and wasted what was earned in card-playing, a passion which he theoretically considered most culpable, but in practice could not deny himself. At the age of sixty he at last acquired property, but lost it still more quickly than he had acquired it, squandering 100 ducats in scarcely a month, and twice as much in the following year. Knowledge had not enlightened and elevated him, nor had it any influence on his mind. Leo Modena possessed neither genius nor character. Dissatisfied with himself and his lot, in constant disquiet on account of his fondness for gaming, and battling with need, his mind was torn asunder



and divided. Religion had also no power over his heart; he preached to others, but not to himself. Unbelief and superstition waged a continual war within him. Hence he envied naïve believers, who, in their simplicity, were undisturbed by doubt, expected happiness from scrupulously following the ritual, and also obtained it, as Leo added. Inquirers, on the contrary, are obliged to struggle first for their faith and the happiness dependent upon it, and are tortured incessantly by pangs of doubt. He had no real earnestness nor true conviction, or rather he had a different one every day, according to his humour and mood, but was not on that account a hypocrite. Hence he could say of himself, "I do not belong to the class of painted people, but my outward conduct always corresponds with my internal nature."

Leo Modena was indeed always sincere. He could in one day put his lance in rest for the Talmud and Rabbinical Judaism, and, on another, vigorously assail it. He condemned gaming, and grieved over his bad luck, that the stars had given him this unfortunate propensity; he believed also in astrology, and yet prepared a Talmudical decision for its condemnation. When the Venetian College of Rabbis pronounced the ban on cards and dice, he pointed out that gaming was allowed according to Rabbinical principles, and that the ban against them had no justification. His disciple, Joseph Chamitz, a physician and mystic, once asked him what was his opinion as to the Kabbalistic transmigration of souls; on which Modena replied that to another he would answer the question affirmatively by word of mouth, even if convinced of the contrary, in order not to be pronounced a heretic and a fool, but to him he was willing to express his sincere and true views. Thereupon Leo Modena prepared a work to expose the absurdity and inconsistency with Judaism of the belief

in transmigration of souls. But so feebly was this conviction rooted in his inward nature that, having been once struck by an extraordinary incident, he again, at least for a time, believed in the transmigration of souls, a theory which is placed so much in the foreground by the Kabbala.

In the ghetto of Venice it created a totally different impression than in Frankfort, Prague, or in Polish-Jewish quarters, that a man like Leo Modena, with his peculiar principles, could be a member of the Rabbinate, and similarly so with the case of Simone Luzzato, who was just as little a Rabbi. In the largest Italian community next to that of Rome, and consisting of 6,000 souls, there were cultivated Jews who had a lively participation in Italian and general European culture, and enjoyed not only a social, but also a literary intercourse with Christian society. The walls of the ghetto formed no sharply-defined partition between the Jewish and Christian population. At this time, in the age of Shakespeare, there was at any rate no Shylock in Venice, who would require as payment for his loan a pound of flesh from his Christian debtor. The people properly so called, the Italian workmen, sailors and porters, were, especially in Venice, milder and more friendly towards the Jews than in other Christian cities. Jewish manufacturers employed 4,000 Christian workmen in the lagoon city, so that their existence depended on their Jewish employers alone. At the time of a devastating pestilence, when, even in this police-governed city, the reigns of government became slacker and looser, and threatened to fall from the hands of those in power, the Jewish capitalists voluntarily offered their money to the State to prevent the occurrence of any embarrassment. There were not a few among them who vied with the cultivated classes among the Christians in the elegant use of

the Italian language in speaking and writing, and also in making good verses. As instances of this may be adduced, together with the two Rabbis, Leo Modena and Simone Luzzato, two Jewish poetesses, Deborah Ascarelli and Sarah Copia Sullam. The first, the wife of a man distinguished in Venice, named Joseph Ascarelli, translated Hebrew hymns into elegant Italian strophes, and also composed original verses. A Jewish-Italian poet addressed her in verses thus: "Others may sing of great trophies, thou glorifiest thy people's praise."

The graceful and spiritual Sarah Copia (born about 1600, died 1641) excited a certain amount of attention in her time. She was an original poetess and thinker, and her gifts, as well as her grace, brought upon her temptations and dangers. The only child of a wealthy father, Simon Copia (Coppio) in Venice, who loved her tenderly, she yielded to her inclination for instruction, and devoted herself to science and literature. To this inclination she remained true even after her marriage with Jacob Sullam. Sarah Copia Sullam surpassed her sex and even men of her age in knowledge. She reigned in the realm of beauty, and breathed out her inspirations in rhythmic and elegant verses. Young, attractive, with a noble heart and a penetrating understanding, striving after greatness, and a favourite of the muses, Sarah Sullam fascinated the old as well as the young. Her ringing, musical and well-trained voice excited admiration. When an elderly Italian priest, Ansaldo Ceba, at Genoa published an heroic poem in Italian strophes, of which the scriptural Esther was the heroine, Sarah was so delighted, that she addressed to the author an enthusiastic anonymous letter full of praise (1618). It pleased her well to see a Jewish heroine, her ideal, celebrated in verses, and the attention of the cultivated public directed to Jewish antiquity.



She hoped that thereby the prejudice against the Jews of the day would vanish. Sarah did not conceal from the poet that she always carried his poetical creations about with her, and even put his book under her pillow at night. Instead of finding satisfaction in the sincere homage of a pure woman's soul, Ceba, in his zeal for conversion, thought only of bringing her over to Christianity. When he had heard Sarah's beauty extolled by the servant whom he sent with presents and verses, a love for her awoke in him. This was further increased by her sending him her portrait, accompanied by enthusiastic verses in the exaggerated style of that time, in which she said to him: "I carry my idol in my heart, and I wish everyone to worship him." But the beautiful Venetian Jewess did not allow herself to be entrapped. She held firmly to her Jewish beliefs, and unfolded to her priestly friend the reasons that induced her to prefer Judaism. In vain did Ceba, by tenderness, reproofs and sentimental languishing, with intimations of his speedy end, and his longing to be united with her in heaven, endeavour to make her waver in her conviction. When he begged of her permission to pray for Catholic salvation on her behalf, she granted him his request on condition that she also might pray for his conversion to Judaism.

But her exceptional position as poetess, and her connection with Christians of high rank, brought her renown, which was not unattended by annoyances. Slandrous fellow-believers spread the report about her, that she esteemed the principles of Judaism but lightly, and did not fully believe in their divinity. An unprincipled Christian clergyman, Balthazar Bonifaccio, who at a later period occupied the position of bishop, published a work with the accusation, that the Jewess Sarah Sullam denied the immortality of the soul. Such a charge



might in Catholic Venice have had other effects than that against Uriel da Costa in free-thinking Protestant Amsterdam. Not merely fine and imprisonment might have been inflicted, but the Inquisition might have sentenced her to the dungeon, torture, and perhaps even the stake. Hardly recovered from illness, she wrote (1621) a manifesto on the immortality of the soul, full of ripe dialectic, noble courage, and crushing force against her slanderous accuser. The dedication which she offers to her deceased father is touching, and still more touching is the fervent prayer in melodious Italian verses in the style of the Psalms. The fact that she, a woman and Jewess, could not rely on her own strength, but only on help from above, served to bestow on her a shining crown. The end of this affair is not known. Ceba's epic, "Esther," probably induced Leo Modena to translate Solomon Usque's tragedy on the same subject from Spanish into Italian verse; he dedicated it to Sarah Copia, whose epitaph he composed in melodious Hebrew verses.

Leo Modena also had frequent intercourse with Christians. His peculiar nature, his communicative disposition and great learning, as also his wit and his fondness for gaming, opened the doors of Christian circles to the lively Rabbi. Christian disciples sat at his feet. The French bishop, Jacob Plantavicius, and the half-crazed Christian Kabbalist, Jacob Gaffarelli, were his pupils. Nobles and learned men corresponded with him, and accepted his works with his flattering dedications. Leo Modena held in Italy nearly the same position as Manasseh ben Israel in Holland. In the conversation of serious men and in the merry circle of gamesters, he often heard the ritual of Judaism ridiculed as childish nonsense (*Lex Judæorum lex puerorum*). At first he defended his religion, but gradually was forced to admit one thing and another in Judaism to be defective and ridiculous; he was ashamed to be so

thoroughly a Jew and to have to justify all consequences. His necessities led him, on pressure from his Christian friends, to render single portions, and at last the whole of the Jewish Code accessible to the Christian public in the Italian language. An English lord paid him for such a work, with the intention of giving it to King James I., who made pretensions to extensive learning. At a later period his Christian disciple, Gaffarelli, had this work, entitled "The Hebrew Rites," printed in Paris, and dedicated it to the French ambassador at Venice. Leo Modena in this work, eagerly read by Christians, laid bare and exposed the inner sanctuary of the Jews to prying and mocking eyes, somewhat as Ham uncovered his father's nakedness. To the uninitiated, that which within the Jewish circle was a matter for reverence could not but appear petty, and even the height of absurdity. Leo Modena explained what ceremonies and observances the Jews employ in their dwelling, their clothing, household furniture, up-rising and lying down, in social arrangements, and in the synagogues and schools. Involuntarily the author associated himself with the despisers of Judaism, which he as Rabbi had both practised and taught. He showed he was conscious of this :

"While writing I have in fact forgotten that I am a Jew, and considered myself as a simple impartial narrator. However, I do not deny that I have taken pains to avoid ridicule on account of the numerous ceremonies, but I also had no intention to defend and palliate, because I wished only to communicate, not convince."

However, it would be an error to infer from this that Leo Modena had in his heart completely broken with Rabbinical Judaism. He was, as has been stated, not a man of firm and lasting convictions. Almost at the very time when he exposed the rites of Judaism to the Christian public, he composed a defence of them and of oral teaching in general

against attacks from the Jewish side. A Hamburg Jew of Marrano descent had raised eleven points to show the falsehood of the Talmudic tradition. Of these arguments some are important, and others, on the contrary, frivolous. The Hamburg sceptic laid chief stress on the point that all Talmudism and Rabbinism were superfluous additions to pentateuchal Judaism, while the Pentateuch had expressly forbidden additions of this sort. Leo Modena confuted these objections, raised by a half-learned man, at the wish of certain Portuguese Jews. His confutation was a feeble performance, and contains nothing new. To be sure, with Leo Modena one never knew whether he was earnest in his belief or unbelief. As in youth he had brought forward reasons for and against games of chance, but though thoroughly condemning them, had nevertheless himself freely engaged in them, so also he behaved with regard to Talmudical Judaism. He attacked it, defended it, made it appear ridiculous, and yet treated it in practice with a certain respect.

Some years after his vindication of Talmudical Judaism against the Hamburg sceptic he composed a work (1624), which is the best that issued from his active pen. On the one side it was a weighty attack on Rabbinical Judaism, such as till then had hardly been made even by Christians and Karaites, and on the other side an impressive defence of it. He did not, however, venture to put his own name to the heavy charges against existing Judaism, but used a fictitious name. The part which contains the attacks he called "Fools' Voices" (*Kol Sachal*), and the defence "Lions' Roarings" (*Shaagat Aryeh*). It is the dissension of his inner self, his own varying conviction, that Leo Modena allotted to two characters. He makes the opponent of Judaism express himself with a boldness such as Uriel da Costa might have envied. Not only did he undermine the Rabbinical Judaism of the Talmud, but



also the Biblical Judaism of the Sinaitic revelation and the Torah.

Much more telling were the blows which Leo Modena, in an attack of unbelief, inflicted on oral teaching, or Talmudical Judaism, under the name of Ibn-Raz of Alkala. He premises that no form of religion has maintained itself in its original state and purity according to the views of its founder. Judaism, also, although the lawgiver expressly warned his followers against adding anything, yet had many additions thrust upon it. Interpretation and comment had altered many things in it. Ibn-Raz (or Leo Modena in his unbelieving mood) examines with a critical eye Jacob Asheri's Code, and at each point marks out where the Rabbis had made additions to the original Code, and where they had weakened and distorted it. He goes so far as to make proposals how to clear Judaism of all these excrescences, in order to restore the genuine, ancient, Biblical, inner Judaism. This was his first attempt at a reform: a simplification of the prayers and synagogue service, abolition of rituals, omission of the second day of the festival, relaxation of the Sabbath, festival, and Passover laws, and even of the Day of Atonement, on which "every one should fast only according to the degree of his bodily and spiritual powers." He wished to see the ritual for slaughtering animals, and the laws as to food all completely set aside or simplified. The prohibition to drink wine with those of other creeds made the Jews ridiculous, as also did the strictness against alleged idolatry. All this, observed Ibn-Raz, or Leo Modena, at the close, does not exhaust the subject, but is only a specimen of the evil of Rabbinical Judaism. He knew well that he would be pronounced a heretic, and persecuted on account of his free-thinking criticism, but if he could only contribute to open



the eyes of a single reader, he would consider himself amply rewarded.

Had Leo Modena been in earnest with this bold view, which would have revolutionised existing Judaism, had he uttered it to the world with deep conviction, he would no doubt have produced a great commotion in Judaism. But the criticism of the Talmud was only a mental amusement for him; he did not intend to engage in an actual conflict. He even composed a reply with as little sincerity, and let both attack and defence slumber among his papers. Leo Modena was more in earnest with the attack on the Kabbala, which had become burdensome and repulsive to him.

Consequently Leo Modena felt obliged to discharge destructive arrows against it, and this he did with a masterly skill. He called the anti-Kabbalistic work, which he dedicated to his disciple, Joseph Chamiz, the incarnate Lurian, the "Roaring Lion" (Ari Noham). From many sides he threw light on the deceptions, the absurdity, and the falsehood of the Kabbala and its fundamental source the Zohar. But neither this work nor his attacks on Talmudical Judaism were published by him: the author was not anxious to labour in either direction. To a late age he continued his irregular courses of study, without striving after real improvement. Leo Modena died, weary of conflict, not in contending against gods (*i.e.*, ideas) and men, but in strife with himself and the troubles which he had brought upon himself.

Apparently similar, yet differing fundamentally from him, was the third burrower of this period: Joseph Solomon Delmedigo (born 1591, died 1655). Scion of an old and noble family (in whose midst a knowledge of the Talmud was cultivated), and great-grandson on the female side of the careful thinker, Elijah Delmedigo, he but slightly resembled the other members of his house. His father, a Rabbi

in Candia, had initiated him not only into Talmudic literature, but also made him learn Greek. At a later period Delmedigo also acquired the cultured languages of that time, Italian and Spanish, in addition to Latin. The knowledge of languages, however, was only a means to an end. At the University of Padua he obtained his scientific education; he showed a decided inclination for mathematics and astronomy, and could boast of having the great Galileo, the discoverer of the heavenly laws, and martyr to natural science, as his tutor. By him he was made acquainted with the Copernican system of the sun and the planets. Neither in Delmedigo nor in any believing Jew was the delusion excited that the stability of the sun and the motion of the earth were in contradiction to the Bible, and therefore heretical. Delmedigo also studied medicine, but only as an amateur; his favourite subject continued to be mathematics. He, however, enriched his mind with all the treasures of knowledge, and thus became a universal scholar, even more so than Leo Modena, to whom during his residence in Italy he clung as a disciple to his master. In the circle of Jewish-Italian semi-freethinkers he lost the simple faith which he had brought from home, and doubts as to the truth of tradition stole upon him, but he was not sufficiently animated by a desire for truth either to overcome these doubts and become settled in the early belief to which he had been brought up, or unsparingly to expose the falsehood among its accumulated errors. Joseph Delmedigo was as little formed to be a martyr for his convictions as had been Leo Modena, the latter from fickleness, the former from insincerity.

With doubt in his heart he returned to his father's house in Candia, and excited opposition by his freer mode of thought, and especially by his preference for secular knowledge. He made enemies, who are

said to have persecuted him, and was again obliged to leave his native land. Then began his life-wandering, which, like his model, Ibn-Ezra, drove him restlessly from city to city. Like him, he made friends with the Karaites wherever he met them, and they thronged to his presence. At Cairo Delmedigo celebrated a complete triumph with his mathematical knowledge, as an old Mahometan teacher of mathematics, Ali Ibn Rahmadan, challenged him, while yet a learner, to a public competition, in which Ali was beaten. The victorious combatant was magnanimous enough to show honour to Ali before the world. Instead of betaking himself to Palestine as he had intended, Delmedigo travelled to Constantinople; here he also attached himself to the circle of the Karaites, and at last passed through Wallachia and Moldavia to Poland. There, mathematics procuring him no bread, he practised medicine, of which, however, he had learnt more from books than by the bedside of patients. In Poland he passed for a great physician, and was taken into the service of Prince Radziwill, in Wilna (about 1619-1620). Here, through the excessive attention given to the Talmud, general culture was forsaken, but youths and men eager for learning, especially Karaites, thronged to Delmedigo to slake their thirst for knowledge. A half-crazed Karaite, Serach ben Nathan of Trok, who had an inclination to Rabbinical Judaism, in order to show his extensive knowledge, with mock humility laid before him a number of important questions, which Delmedigo was to answer offhand, and also sent him as a gift a sable fur for the Polish winter.

Delmedigo found it to his advantage, in order to give himself the appearance of a distinguished character in Poland, to shroud himself in the cloud of silence and seclusion. He at first answered Serach's questions which had been proposed to



him, not personally, but through one of his companions, an amanuensis and follower, Moses Metz. This man described his teacher as a choice intellect, a demi-god, who carried in his brain all human and divine knowledge. He sketched his appearance and character, his occupation and behaviour, regulated according to the scale of higher wisdom, gave information about his descent from a learned and distinguished family on the father's and mother's side, and, as his teacher's mouth-piece, imposed upon the credulous Karaites by saying that he had composed works on all branches of knowledge, at which the world would be astonished, if they came to light. Metz also communicated to Serach some of his teacher's theories in mathematics, religion and philosophy, and thus still more confused Serach's mind. With regard to his communications on Judaism, which Delmedigo either made himself or through Moses Metz, he was very cautious; here and there, it is true, he allowed an appearance of unbelief to glimmer through, but quickly covered it over with a haze of orthodoxy. Only where he could do so without danger did Delmedigo express his real opinion.

When he at last sent the Karaite an answer to a letter with his own hand (about 1621), he did not conceal his true views, but declared his preference for Karaism and its ancient teachers, loaded them undeservedly with praise, exalted science high, and amused himself about the delusions of the Kabala and its adherents. Delmedigo, in a letter to Serach, also indulged in scoffs against the Talmud, and thought the Karaites fortunate that they were able to dispense with it. He had nothing to fear when he unburdened his heart before his Karaite admirer.

Delmedigo does not seem, on the whole, to have been at his ease in Poland. He could not carouse with the nobles whom he attended professionally.



for fear of the Jews, and it was not possible to gain money in so poor a country. So he betook himself through Dantzic to Hamburg, at which place a Portuguese community had been lately permitted to settle. His knowledge of medicine seems to have met with little esteem in the Elbe city. What was his skill in comparison with that of the De Castros, father and son? He was compelled, in order to subsist, to undertake a certain amount of Rabbinical duty, if only as preacher. For the sake of bread he had to play the hypocrite, and to speak in favour of Rabbinical Judaism. Nay, in order to dissipate the rumour about him from Poland, which represented him as a heretic, he was not ashamed to praise the Kabbala, which he had shortly before condemned, as the highest wisdom, before which philosophy and all sciences must be dumb. For this purpose he prepared his defence of the secret doctrine, in refutation of the negative arguments against it by one of his ancestors, Elijah Delmedigo. But this work was simply intended to throw dust in the eyes of the ignorant multitude; it displayed a smattering of learning on all sorts of subjects, but no trace of logic. He was too clever to maintain the sheepish style of dull, stupid credulity, and could not refrain from satire. He defended the genuineness of the Zohar as an ancient work by Simon bar Yochaï, or at least by his school. One must not be shocked by the many incongruities and absurdities to be found in it; the Talmud also contains not a few, and is yet a sacred book, as he argued. In order to save his reputation with the more intelligent, Delmedigo partially let it be seen that he had defended the Kabbala only from necessity. We must not, he says, superficially judge the character of an author according to his words. He, *e.g.*, writes this defence of the Kabbala at the desire of a patron of high position, who is enamoured of it. Should this friend be of another mind, and require an

attack upon the Kabbala, he would not refuse him. In conclusion, he observes: "Philosophical students would no doubt ridicule him for having turned his back on wisdom, and betaken himself to folly; but he would rather be called a fool all his life than for a single hour make an attack on piety."

This work, which was commenced in Hamburg, Delmedigo could not finish there. A pestilence broke out, and drove him, physician as he was, to Glückstadt. In this small community, where, as he said, there was neither town nor luck, he met with no success, nor could he find any means of subsistence, and he travelled on to Amsterdam about 1629. He could not attempt to practise medicine in a city where physicians lived of even higher eminence than at Hamburg, and so was obliged a second time to apply himself to the functions of Rabbi. To show his importance, he printed the scientific replies which he had given to the questions of his Polish admirer, with all the bungling eulogies, clouds of incense, and follies, which the young Karaite Serach had offered to him. It is a work of truly Polish disorder, in which, together with mathematical theorems and scientific problems, philosophical and theological questions are also discussed, in a confused method. But Delmedigo took care not to print his attacks upon the Kabbala and the Talmud, and his preference for the Karaites—in short, all that he had written to please the rich Serach. Instead of publishing an encyclopædic work which he boastfully said he had composed in his earliest youth, and which embraced all sciences and solved all questions, he produced a mere medley.

The Amsterdam community was then full of suspicion against philosophy and culture owing to the reckless behaviour of Da Costa, and therefore Delmedigo thought it advisable to ward off every suspicion of unbelief, and get a reputation

for the strictest orthodoxy. But this transparent hypocrisy did not answer well. He was, it is true, appointed as preacher, and partially as Rabbi, in or near Amsterdam, but he could only remain in Holland for a few years. Powerless and weak as he was, he went with his wife to Frankfort-on-the-Maine about 1630 to seek a means of subsistence. But here, in a German community where Rabbinical learning was diffused, he could not obtain a Rabbinical office; but he turned his medical knowledge, scanty as it was, to account. As he felt no vocation for the office of Rabbi nor for medical practice, it was a matter of indifference to him if he changed the preacher's gown for the doctor's mantle. He was engaged, under irksome conditions, as communal doctor (Feb. 14th, 1631). How long he remained at Frankfort is not known; his position cannot have been favourable, for he removed from that city to Prague (about 1648-1650), and in this most neglected community he settled. Later (1652) he was at Worms, probably only temporarily, and ended his life, which had promised so much, but had realised so little, at Prague. Nor did he publish any part of his great work, which he began and announced with so much pomposity.

In some measure Simone (Simcha) Luzzato (born about 1590, died 1663) may be reckoned among the sceptics of this time. He was, together with Leo Modena, a Rabbi in Venice. Luzzato was not an eminent personage; but he had more solidity than his colleague Modena, or than Delmedigo. By the latter, who knew him personally, he was praised as a distinguished mathematician. He was also well read in ancient and modern literature. His uprightness and love of truth, which he never belied, distinguished him still more than his knowledge and learning. A parable, which Luzzato wrote in Italian in his youth, shows the tendency of his mind, as also his maturity of thought, and that



he had reflected early on the relation of faith to knowledge. He puts his thoughts into the mouth of Socrates, the father of Greek wisdom. At Delphi an academy had been formed for the purpose of rectifying the errors of human knowledge. Reason immediately presented a petition from the dungeon, where she had been so long kept by orthodox authority, to set her at liberty. Although the chief representatives of knowledge, Pythagoras and Aristotle, spoke against this request, and uttered a warning against her liberation, because, when free, she would produce and spread abroad the most frightful errors, yet the academy set her at liberty; for by that means alone could knowledge be promoted. But the newly liberated minds caused great mischief; and the academicians were at a loss what to do. Then Socrates rose, and in a long speech explained that both reason and authority, if allowed to reign alone, would produce only error and mischief; on the contrary, if mutually limited, reason by revelation, and this again by reason, they give the right proportion and produce a beautiful harmony, whereby man may attain his goal both here below and hereafter. This thought, that reason and faith must regulate and keep watch over each other, which, in Maimuni's time had already passed into a commonplace, was at this period, under the rule of Lurya's Kabbala, considered in Jewish circles as a bold innovation.

Simone Luzzato did not suffer himself to be ensnared by Kabbalistic delusions; he did not cast reason behind him; he was a believer, but withal sober-minded. He did not share the delusion of Manasseh ben Israel and others that the lost ten tribes of Israel were existing in some part of the world enjoying independence as a military power. With sober Jewish inquirers of former times, he assumed that Daniel's revelation does not point to a future Messiah, but only reflected his-



torical events. He also composed a work on the manners and beliefs of the Jews, which he proposed to exhibit "faithfully to truth, without zeal and passion." It was probably designed to form a counterpart to Leo Modena's representation which had cast a shadow over Judaism.

Luzzato's defence of Judaism and the Jews, under the title "A Treatise on the Position of the Hebrews," is masterly. It speaks eloquently for his practical, sober sense, for his love of truth, his attachment to Judaism, and his solid knowledge. He did not wish to dedicate it to any individual patron out of flattery, but to the friends of truth in general. He conjured these friends not to esteem the remnant of the ancient Hebrew nation, even if disfigured by sufferings, and saddened by long oppression, more lightly than a mutilated work of art by Phidias or Lysippus, since all men were agreed that this nation was once animated and led by the greatest of all Masters. It is astonishing what thorough knowledge the Rabbi had of the commerce of that time, and the influence upon it of the political position of European and neighbouring Asiatic States. The object of his defence was primarily to disarm the ill-will of certain Venetian patricians against the Jews in that police-governed state. The people, properly so-called, had little antipathy to the Jews; they lived to some extent on them. But among those who had a share in the government there were fanatical religious zealots and envious opponents, who advocated further restrictions, or even banishment. It did not at all suit them that the Venetian Jews, who, shut up in the ghetto, possessed neither land nor the right to carry on any handicraft, yet competed with them in finance and trade. The commercial city of Venice, far surpassed by the naval powers, Holland and England, which had sprung up, and which had gradually obtained control of the trade with the Levant, saw many of its great houses of business in

splendid misery, while Jewish capitalists stepped into their place and seized the Levantine business. With artful turns and delicate hints, Luzzato gave the politicians of Venice to understand that exhaustion was the commencement of the downfall of the Republic. The prosperous cared only to keep what they had acquired and for enjoyment, and the former Venetian commerce seemed to be falling into the hands of foreigners. Hence the Jews had become a blessing to the State. It was more advisable to leave the foreign trade, especially that of the East, to native Jews, and to protect them, than to see it diverted to neighbouring towns, or to strangers, who, in the country itself, formed a State within a State, who were not always obedient to the laws, and gradually carried the ready money out of the country. Luzzato calculated from statistics that the Jews contributed more than 250,000 ducats to the Republic every year, that they gave bread to 4,000 workpeople, supplied home manufactures at a cheap rate, and obtained goods from distant countries. It was reserved for a Rabbi to bring this political-economical tide, which was a vital point for the insular Republic, under the notice of wise counsellors. Luzzato also called attention to the important advantage which the capital of the Jews had recently been, when, during the pestilence and the dissolution of political government, the Jews had spontaneously offered money to the State to prevent embarrassment.

Luzzato also defended the Jews against attacks on the religious side, but on this point his exposition is not original. If he brought out the bright traits of his Jewish contemporaries, he by no means passed over their dark ones in silence, and that redounded to his credit. Luzzato depicted them in the following manner. However different may be the manner of the Venetian Jews from their

brethren in Constantinople, Damascus, Germany, or Poland, they yet have all something in common:—

“It is a nation of timid and unmanly disposition : in the present position incapable of political government—occupied only with its separate interests, and caring little about the public welfare. The economy of the Jews borders on avarice ; they are admirers of antiquity, and have no eye for the present course of things. Many of them are uneducated, without taste for learning or the knowledge of languages, and, in following the laws of their religion, they exaggerate to the most painful degree. But they have also noteworthy peculiarities—firmness and endurance in their religion, uniformity of doctrinal teaching in the long course of more than fifteen centuries since the dispersion ; wonderful stedfastness, which leads them, if not to go into dangers, yet to endure and hold out against the severest suffering. They possess a knowledge of Holy Scripture and its exposition, gentleness and hospitality to the members of their race—the Persian Jew sympathises in some degree with the wrongs of the Italian—strict abstinence from carnal offences, extraordinary carefulness to keep the family unspotted, and skill in managing difficult matters. They are submissive and accommodating to everyone, only not to their brethren in religion. Many failings of the Jews have rather the character of cowardice and meanness than of cruelty and atrocity.”

What Luzzato's position was with regard to the Talmud he did not distinctly state, but only explained generally that there are three or four classes of Jews : Talmudists or Rabbanites, who make the oral law contemporary in origin with the Bible ; secondly, a philosophical and cultured class ; and, lastly, Kabbalists and Karaites. Yet he intimated that he held the Talmudical tradition to be true ; whilst, on the contrary, he considered the Kabbala as not of Jewish, but of Platonic, Pythagorean and Gnostic origin. One of his disciples relates of him that he made merry over the Kabbalists, and thought their theory had no claim to the title of a tradition ; it was wanting in the Holy Spirit.

These four thinkers, more or less dissatisfied with existing Judaism, who were furnished with so much intellect, knowledge, and eloquence, yet exerted very little influence over their Jewish contemporaries, and thus did not break through the prevailing obscurity in the smallest degree. Luzzato wrote for only a limited class of readers, and did not



inflict, or wish to inflict, any heavy blows on Judaism. Uriel da Costa missed his mark on account of his violent, impatient disposition; Leo Modena was himself too wavering, driven hither and thither by the wind of conflicting opinions, to acquire any serious conviction and to do battle for them. He made his attacks on the weak side of Judaism, as has already been stated, in silence. Joseph Delmedigo did more harm than good through his insincerity and hypocrisy. He senselessly spoke in favour of the confused doctrines of the Kabbala, and by the weight of his other knowledge confirmed and increased the delusion of the multitude. But from two other quarters, by two quite opposite characters, weighty blows against Judaism were delivered, which threatened completely to shatter it. Reason incorporated in some measure in one Jew, and incarnate unreason in another, joined hands to treat Judaism as abolished and dissolved, and so to speak, to dethrone the God of Israel.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### SPINOZA AND SABBATAÏ ZEVI.

Spinoza's Youth and Education—His Intellectual Breach with Judaism—Fresh Martyrs to the Inquisition—The Rabbis and Spinoza—Excommunication—Spinoza's "Tractate" and "Ethics"—Spinoza's Writings concerning Judaism—Spinoza's Contemporaries in Amsterdam—De Paz and Penso—The Mystical Character assigned to the Years 1648 and 1666—Sabbataï Zevi's early Career—The Jerusalem Community—Sabbataï's Travels—Nathan Ghazati—Sabbataï announced in Smyrna as the Messiah—Spread of the enthusiastic Belief in the pseudo-Messiah—Manoel Texeira—Ritual Changes introduced by the Sabbatians—Sabbataï proceeds to Constantinople—Nehemiah Cohen—Sabbataï Zevi's Apostasy to Islam and its Consequences—Continuation of the Sabbatian Movement—Death of Sabbataï and of Spinoza—After-results of the Sabbatian Imposture.

1656—1677 C.E.

WHILST Manasseh ben Israel was zealously labouring to complete the fabric of Judaism by hastening on the Messianic era, one of his disciples was applying an intellectual lever to raze this edifice to its foundation and convert it into a shapeless dust heap. He made earnest of that which was only amusement for Leon Modena. The Jewish race had once more brought a deep thinker into the world, one who was radically to heal the human mind from its rooted perversities and errors, and to prescribe a new direction for it, that it might better comprehend the connection between heaven and earth, between mind and matter. Like his ancestor Abraham, this Jewish thinker desired to break to pieces all idols and vain images, before which men had hitherto bowed down through fear, custom, and indolence of mind, and to reveal to them a new God, not enthroned in heaven's height beyond their reach, but living and moving within them, and

whose temple they themselves should be. His influence was like that of the storm, deafening and crushing down, but also purifying and refreshing.

The lightning flashes of this great philosophical genius were aimed chiefly against Judaism which lay nearest to him. In the existing paralysis of religion and its professors, even his far-searching gaze could not recognise the fair form concealed beneath a loathsome exterior.

This great thinker, the most famous philosopher of his time, who brought about a new redemption, was Baruch Spinoza (properly speaking, Espinosa, born in Spain c.E. 1632, died c.E. 1677). He belonged to a family neither eminent for intellect nor for wealth. No sign at his birth portended that he would reign for more than two centuries as king in the realm of thought. He attended the newly established Jewish school, consisting of seven classes, with many other boys in Amsterdam, whither his parents had migrated. With his extraordinary talents he must have dispensed with the usual curriculum, or taken it at a flying leap. In his thirteenth or fourteenth year he was probably introduced by Manasseh ben Israel to the study of the Talmud, and initiated in Hebrew grammar, rhetoric, and poetry. He received final instruction in Rabbinical lore from Saul Morteira, the greatest Talmudist of his time in Amsterdam. In Morteira's lecture-room there were together with Spinoza some fellow-pupils, who later had more or less influence on Jewish history, but who were of quite another stamp.

The first disciple of Morteira was held to be Moses Zacut (c.E. 1630-1697), a descendant of the famous family of that name. From his youth upwards, with his predilection for mysticism and poetry, he formed a direct contrast to Spinoza. He loved what was inexact and obscure, Spinoza the clear and definite. Two incidents may serve to portray Moses Zacut. He was asked when young what he thought



of the fabulous narratives of Rabba Bar-Bar-Chana in the Talmud—which are like those of Munchhausen—and he replied that he regarded them as historical. When young he learned Latin like most Portuguese youths in Amsterdam. Later, he so regretted having learned that language, that he fasted forty days in order to forget it, because, as he thought, this tongue of the Devil was not compatible with Kabbalistic truth. Another fellow-disciple of Spinoza was Isaac Naar (Nahar), likewise a mystic, and, in addition, of a spiteful and not over-scrupulous nature.

The thirst for knowledge stimulated Spinoza to venture beyond the limited circle of studies, which were pursued in Morteira's lecture-room. He plunged into the writings of older Jewish thinkers, three of whom alike attracted and repelled him: Ibn-Ezra with his free method of thinking and his reticence, Moses Maimuni with his artificial system, aiming at the reconciliation of faith and science, of Judaism and philosophy, and finally Chasdaï Crescas with his hostility to traditional philosophy. Spinoza was also at home in the Kabbala, the main doctrines of which had at that time been rendered accessible through Abraham de Herrera and Isaac Aboab. These various elements heaved and fermented in his mind, which strove for insight, and excited in his breast tormenting doubts, to which Ibn-Ezra's covert unbelief mainly contributed. Already when a youth of fifteen, Spinoza is said to have expressed his doubts in the form of questions to his master Morteira, which may have not a little perplexed a Rabbi accustomed to the beaten tracks. Besides these elements of scepticism, conveyed to him from Jewish literature, there came new ones from without. Spinoza also learned Latin, which was in itself nothing remarkable, since, as has been already remarked, nearly all the Jewish youths of Amster-

dam, as well as Christians of the educated classes of Holland, regarded that language as a means of culture. But he was not contented with superficial knowledge; he desired to drink deeper of classical literature. For this purpose he sought the instruction of an eminent philologist of his time, Dr. Franz van den Enden, who lectured in Amsterdam to noble youths, native and foreign. Here he learned, in contact with educated Christian youths, to adopt a different point of view from that which obtained in Morteira's lecture-room and the Jewish circle of ideas. Van den Enden also strongly influenced his mind. He was, indeed, though not an atheist, yet a man of sceptical and satirical vein, who turned religious customs and prejudices to ridicule and exposed their nakedness. But what with him was only an object of humour and wit, became in Spinoza's susceptible and analytical mind an exciting element to deep reflection and meditation. The sciences of mathematics and physics, which he pursued with devotion, and the new-born, imposing philosophy of Descartes (Cartesius), for which his mind had a special affinity, extended his circle of vision and enlightened his power of judgment. Thus imbibing ideas gathered from various sources, he added new thoughts to those innate in him, and the more his logically direct understanding developed, the more did he become alienated from Judaism, with its Rabbinical and Kabbalistic train of thought, and there needed not the love of Van den Enden's learned daughter in addition, to make him a pervert from Jewish belief.

Independent, judicial reason, which looks beyond what is merely traditional or only hallowed by time, and which follows its own laws, was his mistress. To her he dedicated a pure, undivided worship, and she led him to break with his inherited views. All which could not be justified before the inexorable tribunal of clear human vision, passed

with him for superstition and clouded thought, if not actual frenzy. His ardent desire for what he deemed truth, pure truth and certainty, led him to a complete breach with the religion endeared to him from childhood; he rejected not only Talmudical Judaism, but also regarded the Bible as the work of man. The apparent contradictions in the books of Holy Scripture appear to have first raised his doubts as to their inspiration. It must have cost him a hard struggle to give up the customs and opinions endeared to him through manifold ties, and to become, to a certain extent, a new man. For Spinoza was quite as much a moral character as a deep thinker. To hold anything as false in theory and yet from fear, custom or advantage to adopt it in practice was impossible for him. He was differently constituted to his revered master, Descartes, who kept away from the church the torch of truth which he had kindled, made a gap between theory and practice to avoid offending that church, and, for example, vowed a pilgrimage to our Lady of Loretto for the success of his system and its destructive tendency. According to Spinoza's idea every action ought to be a true reflection of reason. When he could no longer find truth in Judaism, he could no longer bring himself to follow its ritual precepts. He ceased to attend the synagogue, cared no longer for the Sabbath and the festivals, and broke the laws concerning diet. He did not confine himself merely to the renunciation of Judaism, but imparted his convictions also to young men who sought his instruction.

The representatives of the community of Amsterdam were the more concerned at the daily increasing report of Spinoza's estrangement from, and hostility to Judaism, as they had seen themselves to some degree reflected in the high-gifted youth, and had regarded him as a firm support



to the jealously-guarded religion of their fathers. Now it was to be feared that he would abandon it, go over to Christianity and devote his intellectual gifts to doing battle against his mother-faith. Could the representatives of that faith—the College of Rabbis and the presidents—behold with indifference this systematic neglect of Judaism in their midst. Fugitives were ever coming from Spain and Portugal, who forfeited their high position and staked life and property in order to remain true to Judaism. Others with unbending attachment to the faith of their fathers, let themselves be dragged to the dark prisons of the Inquisition, or with cheerful courage mounted the funeral pile. A contemporary writer, an eyewitness, reports :

“ In Spain and Portugal there are monasteries and convents full of Jews. Not a few conceal Judaism in their heart and feign Christianity on account of their worldly goods. Some of these feel the stings of conscience and escape, if they are able. In this city (Amsterdam) and in several other places we have monks, Augustinians, Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, who have rejected idolatry. There are bishops in Spain and grave monks, whose parents, brothers or sisters, dwell here (in Amsterdam) and in other cities in order to be able to profess Judaism.”

At the very time when Spinoza became estranged from Judaism, the smoke and flames of the funeral piles of Jewish martyrs rose in several cities of Spain and Portugal, in Cuença, Granada, Santiago de Compostella, Cordova and Lisbon.

In the last-named city a distinguished Marrano, Manuel Fernando de Villa-Real, a statesman, political writer and poet, who conducted the consular affairs of the Portuguese Court at Paris, returned to Lisbon on business, was seized by the Inquisition, gagged and led to execution (December 1st, 1652). In Cuença on one day (June 29th, 1654) fifty-seven Christian proselytes to Judaism were dragged to the auto-da-fé. Most of them only received corporal chastisement with loss

of their property, but ten were burned to death. Amongst them was a distinguished man, the court-saddler Balthazar Lopez, from Valladolid, who had amassed a fortune of 100,000 ducats. He had previously migrated to Bayonne, where already a small community of former Marranos was tolerated, and had only returned to Spain in order to persuade a nephew to come back to Judaism. There he was seized by the Inquisition, tortured and condemned to death by the halter and the stake. On his way to the scaffold, Balthazar Lopez ridiculed the Inquisition and Christianity. He exclaimed to the executioner who was about to bind him, "I do not believe in your Christ, even if you bind me," and threw the cross, which was forced upon him, to the ground. Five months later twelve Marranos were burnt in Granada. Again, some months later (March, 1655), a promising youth of twenty, Marcos da Almeyda Bernal, whose Jewish name was Isaac, died at the stake; and two months afterwards (May 3rd) Abraham Nuñez Bernal was burnt at Cordova.

Whoever in the community of Amsterdam could compose verses in Spanish, Portuguese or Latin, sang or bewailed the martyrdom of the two Bernals. And had all these martyrs, and the thousands of ever-persecuted Jewish victims of the Inquisition, according to Spinoza's views, pursued a delusion? Could the representatives of Judaism allow unreprieved, in their immediate neighbourhood, the promulgation of the idea that Judaism is merely an antiquated error?

The College of Rabbis, in which sat the two chief Chachams, Saul Morteira and Isaac Aboab—Manasseh ben Israel was then living in London—had before ascertained the fact of Spinoza's change of opinion, and had collected evidence. It was, indeed, not so easy to accuse him of apostasy, as he did not proclaim his thoughts aloud in the

market-place, as Uriel da Costa had announced his breach with Judaism. Besides, he led a quiet, self-contained life, and associated little with men. His avoidance of the synagogue, which might, indeed, at first have given offence, could not form the subject of a Rabbinical accusation. It is possible that, as is related, two of his fellow-students (one, perhaps, the sly Isaac Naar) thrust themselves upon him, overheard his words, and accused him of unbelief and contempt for religion. Spinoza was thereupon summoned, tried and admonished to return to his former course of life. The court of Rabbis did not at first proceed with severity against him, for he was a favourite of his teachers, and beloved in the community on account of his modest mode of life and moral behaviour. By virtue of the firmness of his character Spinoza made no sort of concessions, but took his stand upon freedom of thought and conduct. Without doubt he was, in consequence of this, laid under a light interdict, that is, any close intercourse with him was forbidden for thirty days. This may have caused less pain to Spinoza, who, centred in himself, found sufficient resource in his rich world of thought, than it did to the superficial Da Costa. Also he was not without Christian friends, and he therefore made no alteration in his manner of life. This firmness was naturally on the other side construed as obstinacy and defiance. But yet the Rabbinate, as well as the Presidency, did not wish to exert the rigour of the Rabbinical law against him in order to drive him to extremities, *i. e.*, into the arms of the Church. What harm might not the conversion to Christianity of so remarkable a youth entail in a newly-founded community, which consisted of Jews with Christian reminiscences! What an impression would it make on the Marranos in Spain and Portugal! Perhaps also the scandal caused by Da Costa's excommuni-



cation, which was still fresh in men's memories, may have rendered a repetition of it impracticable. The Rabbis therefore made a private offer to Spinoza through his friends of a yearly pension of a thousand gulden on condition that he should take no hostile step against Judaism and should show himself from time to time in the synagogue. But Spinoza, though still young, was already of so determined a character, that money could not entice him to abandon his convictions or to act the hypocrite. He insisted that he would not give up the freedom of inquiry and thought. He also continued to impart to Jewish youths doctrines that undermined Judaism. So the tension between him and the representatives of Judaism became daily greater; both sides were right, or imagined they were. A fanatic in Amsterdam thought he could put an end to this breach by a dagger-stroke aimed at the dangerous apostate. He waylaid Spinoza at the exit from the theatre, and struck at the philosopher with his murderous weapon. But the latter had observed the hostile movement in time, and avoided the blow, so that only his coat was damaged. In consequence of this Spinoza left Amsterdam to avoid the danger of assassination, and betook himself to the house of a friend, who likewise was persecuted by the dominant Calvinistic Church. This was an adherent of the sect of the Rhynsburgians or Collectants, who dwelt in a village between Amsterdam and Oudekerk. A reconciliation between Spinoza and the synagogue was no longer to be thought of. Therefore the Rabbis and Presidency pronounced the heaviest sentence upon him and proclaimed it in the Portuguese language on a Thursday, 6th Ab (July 24th), 1656, shortly before the fast in memory of the destruction of Jerusalem. This sentence was pronounced solemnly in the synagogue from the pulpit

at the opening of the sacred Ark. The sentence was as follows :

“The Council has long had notice of the evil opinions and actions of Baruch d’Espinosa, and these are daily increasing in spite of the efforts to reclaim him. In particular, he teaches and proclaims dreadful heresy, of which credible witnesses are present, who have made their depositions in presence of the accused. This had all been proved in the presence of the Elders, and accordingly the Council has resolved to place him under a ban and to excommunicate him.”

Thereupon the usual curses were pronounced upon him in presence of scrolls of the Law, and finally the Council forbade any one to have intercourse with him, verbally or by writing, to procure favour for him, to abide under the same roof with him, or to come within the space of four cubits’ distance from him, or to read what was written by him. The ban against Spinoza was stringently enforced, contrary to the usual wont, in order to keep young people at a distance from his heresies.

Spinoza was away from Amsterdam, when the ban was hurled against him. He is said to have received the news with indifference, and to have remarked that he was now compelled to do what he would otherwise have done without compulsion. His philosophic nature, which loved solitude, could also easily dispense with intercourse with relatives and former friends. Yet the matter did not end for him entirely without result. The Presidency of the Portuguese community also appealed to the temporal authorities in order to effect his perpetual banishment from Amsterdam. The magistrates referred the question, which was properly a theological one, to the clergy, and the latter are said to have proposed his withdrawal from Amsterdam for some months. Most probably this procedure of the Presidency prompted him to elaborate a justificatory pamphlet to show the civil authorities that he was no violator or transgressor of the laws of the State, but that he had only exercised his just rights, when he reflected on the

religion of his forefathers, and religion generally, and thought out other views. The chain of reasoning employed by Spinoza while preparing this defence of himself caused him doubtless to give a wider extension and bearing to this question. It gave him the opportunity to treat of freedom of thought and inquiry generally, and therewith to lay the foundation of the first of his suggestive writings, which have conferred upon him literary immortality. In the village to which he had withdrawn, 1656-60, and later in Rhynsburg, where he also spent several years, 1660-64, Spinoza occupied himself (while cutting optical glasses, which handicraft he had learned to secure his moderate subsistence), with the Cartesian philosophy and the elaboration of the work, entitled "The Theologico-Political Treatise." It was especially important for him to widen the conviction that freedom of thought can be established without prejudice to religion and the peace of the State, and yet farther, that it must be established; for if it should be forbidden, religion and peace could not exist in the State.

The apology for freedom of thought had been rendered harder rather than easier for Spinoza, for he weakened the main lines of his system by the subsidiary ideas he sought to introduce. That is to say, he could not philosophically find the main sources of right, and therefore transferred the origin of it to might. Neither God nor the moral conscience dwelling in the mind of man form, according to Spinoza, the fountain of that eternal right which rules and civilizes not only mankind, but the whole lower natural world. He made men to a certain extent "like the fishes of the sea, like worms, which have no master." The large fish have the right, not only to drink water, but also to devour smaller fish, because they have the power to do so; also the sphere of right of the individual man extends just as far as his sphere of might. This



natural right does not at all recognise the difference between good and evil, virtue and vice, submission and despotism. But because such a state of unlimited assertion on the part of each must lead to a perpetual state of war of all against all, men have tacitly, from fear, or hope, or reason, given up these wider privileges of theirs and transferred them to a collective body, the State. Out of two evils—the full possession of their sphere of right and might, tending to mutual destruction on the one hand, and alienation of it on the other—men have chosen the latter as the lesser evil. The State, whether it is represented by a supreme authority elected for the purpose, such as the Dutch States-General, or by a despot, is the full possessor of the rights of all, just because it possesses the power of all. Every one is bound by his own interest to unconditional obedience, even if he should be commanded to deprive others of their life; every resistance to it is not only punishable, but also contrary to reason. This supreme power is not controlled by any law. Whether it is exercised by an individual, as in a monarchy, or by several, as in a republic, it is justified in doing everything, and can do no wrong. But the State has supreme right not merely over actions of a civil nature, but also over spiritual and religious views; it could not exist, if everyone were at liberty to attack it under the pretext of religion. The government has thus alone the right to fix and define the ordinances of religion, to declare what is belief, what unbelief, orthodoxy and heresy. What a tyrannical conclusion! As this theory of Spinoza fails to recognise moral right, so also it ignores steadfast fidelity. As soon as the government grows weak and loses strength, it has no longer any claim to obedience; everyone may renounce and resist it, in order to submit himself to the incoming power. According to this theory of civil and religious despotism, no one

may properly have an opinion of his own about the laws of the State, otherwise he is a rebel. Spinoza's theory quite does away with freedom, even of thought and opinion. Whoever speaks against any ordinance of the State, finds fault with the government or brings it into odium, or seeks to repeal any law against its express wish, should be regarded as a disturber of the public peace. Only through a sophistical quibble was Spinoza able to save freedom of thought and free expression of opinion. Every man has this right by nature, and it is the only one which he has not alienated or transferred to the hands of the State, because it is essentially inalienable. It must be conceded to everyone to think and judge even in opposition to the opinion of the government, also to speak and teach, provided this be done with reason and reflection, without fraud, anger or malice, and without the intention of causing a revolution.

On this weak basis, supported by a few other secondary considerations, Spinoza justified his conflict with Judaism and his philosophical attacks against the sacred writings, which were recognised even by the Dutch States. He also thought that he had succeeded in justifying himself before the magistrates sufficiently by his defence of freedom of thought. In the formulation of this apology it was however apparent that he was not indifferent to the treatment which he had experienced on the part of the College of Rabbis. Spinoza was so filled with displeasure, if not with hatred of Jews and Judaism, that his otherwise clear judgment became biassed. He, like Da Costa, called the Rabbis nothing but Pharisees, and imputed to them ambitious and degraded motives, while they wished only to secure their treasured beliefs against attacks. Prouder even than were his contemporaries the French and English philosophers of that freedom of thought, which for centuries had been repressed

by the Church and was now soaring aloft the more powerfully, Spinoza summoned theology and, in particular, ancient Judaism before her throne, examined its dogmas and archives, and pronounced his sentence of condemnation upon his mother-faith. He had erected a tower of thought in his brain from which he somehow intended to storm heaven. Spinoza's philosophy is, however, like a fine net, which is laid before our eyes, mesh by mesh, and by which the human understanding is unexpectedly ensnared, so that half voluntarily, half compulsorily, it must surrender. Spinoza recognised, as no thinker before him had done, those universal laws, immutable as iron, which are apparent in the development of the most insignificant grain of seed no less than in the revolution of the heavenly bodies, in the precision of mathematical thought as in the apparent irregularity of human passions. Whilst these laws work with constant uniformity and produce the same causes and the same phenomena in endless succession, the instruments of law are perishable things, creatures of a day, which rise and vanish to give place to others: here eternity, there temporality; on the one side necessity, on the other chance; here reality, there delusive appearances. These and other enigmas Spinoza sought to solve with his penetrating genius, in which the son of the Talmud is not to be disguised, but also with a logical consecutiveness and masterly arrangement, for which Aristotle might have envied him.

The whole universe, all individual things, and their active powers are, according to Spinoza, not merely from God, but of God; they constitute the infinite succession of forms in which God reveals Himself, through which He eternally works according to His eternal nature—the soul, as it were, of thinking bodies, the body of souls extended in space. God is the indwelling, not the external



efficient cause of all things; all is in God and moves in God. God as creator and generator of all things is generative or self-producing nature. The whole of nature is animate, and the successions of ideas, as those of bodies, move in eternity on lines running parallel to or intersecting one another. Though the fulness of things which have proceeded from God and which exist in Him are not of an eternal, but of a perishable nature, yet these are not limited or defined by chance, but directed by the necessity of the divine nature, each in its own way to exist or act within its smaller or larger sphere. The eternal and constant nature of God works in them through the eternal laws communicated to them. Things could therefore not have been constituted otherwise than they are; for they are the manifestations, entering into existence in an eternal stream, of God in the inner connection of thought and extension.

What is man's place in this closely determined system? How is he to act and work? Even he with all his greatness and littleness, his strength and weakness, his heaven-aspiring mind, and his body subject to the needs of sustenance, is nothing more than a form of existence (Modus) of God. Man after man, generation after generation, springs up and perishes, flows away like a drop in a perpetual stream, but his proper nature, and the laws which move him bodily and mentally in the peculiar connection of mind and matter, reflect the Divine Being. That is to say, the human mind, or rather the various modes of thought, feelings and conceptions of men, form the eternal reason of God. But man is just as little free as all other things, as the stone which rolls down from the mountain; but he has to obey the causes which influence him from within and without. Each of his actions is a product of an infinite series of causes and effects, which he can scarcely discern, much less control

and alter at his will. The good man and the bad, the martyr who sacrifices himself for a noble object, as well as the execrable villain and the murderer, are all like clay in the hands of God; they are obliged to act, the one well, the other ill, compelled by their inner nature. They all act from rigid necessity. No man can reproach God for having given him a weak nature or a clouded intellect, just as it would be irrational, if the circle should complain that God has not given it the nature and properties of the sphere. It is not the lot of every man to be strong-minded, and it lies as little in his power to have a sound mind as a sound body.

Yet on one side man is, to a certain extent, free, or rather some men of special mental endowments can free themselves a little from the pressure exercised upon them. Man is a slave chiefly through his passions. Love, hate, anger, thirst for glory, avarice make him the slave of the external world. These passions spring from the perplexity of the soul, which thinks it can control things, but wears itself out, so to speak, against their obstinate resistance, and suffers pain thereby. The more the intelligence of the soul succeeds in comprehending the succession of causes and effects and the necessity of phenomena in the whole of the universe, the more is it able to exchange pain for a sense of comfort. Through higher insight, man can if he allows himself to be led by reason acquire strength of soul, and feel an increased love to God, that is, to the eternal whole. This secures, on the one hand, nobility of mind to aid men and to win them by mildness and benevolence; and creates, on the other, satisfaction, joy and happiness. He who is gifted with highest knowledge lives in God, and God in him. Knowledge is virtue, as ignorance is, to a certain extent, vice. Whilst the wise man, or strictly speaking the philosopher, thanks to his higher insight and his love of God, can enjoy tran-

quillity of soul, the man of clouded intellect, who abandons himself to the madness of his passions, must dispense with this joyousness, and perish in consequence. The highest virtue, according to Spinoza's system, is self-renunciation through knowledge, keeping in a state of passiveness, coming as little as possible in contact with the crushing machinery of forces—avoiding them if they come near, or submitting to them if their wild career overthrows the individual. But as little as he who is beset by desires deserves to be blamed, so little is praise due to the wise man who practises self-renunciation; both follow the law of their nature. Higher knowledge and wisdom cannot be attained if the conditions thereto are wanting, namely, a mind susceptible of knowledge and truth, which one can neither give to himself nor acquire. Man has thus no final aim, any more than the eternal substance.

Spinoza's moral doctrines—ethics in the narrower sense—are just as unfruitful as his political theories. In either case, he recognises submission as the only reasonable course.

With this conception of God and moral action, it need not surprise us that Judaism found no favour in Spinoza's eyes. Judaism lays down directly opposite principles—beckons man to a high, self-reliant task, and proclaims aloud the progress of mankind in simple service of God, holiness and its victory over violence, the sword and destructive war. This progress has also been furthered in many ways by Judaism in the course of ages. Wanting, as Spinoza generally was, in apprehension of historical events, which are more wonderful than the phenomena of nature, and unable as he therefore was to accord to Judaism its special importance, he misconceived it still further through the bitterness which he felt against the Amsterdam College of Rabbis, who, pardonably enough, had excom-



municated him. Spinoza also transferred his bitterness against the community to the whole Jewish race and to Judaism. He designated the Rabbis, as has been already said, as Pharisees in his "Theologico-Political Treatise," as well as in letters to his friends, and gave the most invidious meaning to this word. To Christianity, on the contrary, Spinoza showed a strong preference, because he regarded Judaism with displeasure, and therefore detected deficiencies and absurdities everywhere, while he cast a benevolent eye upon Christianity, and overlooked its weaknesses. Spinoza, therefore, with all the instinct for truth which characterised him, had formed a conception of Judaism which, while in some degree just, was, in many points, perverse and defective. Clear as his mind was on metaphysical inquiries, it was dark and confused on historical ground. In order to depreciate Judaism, Spinoza declared that the books of Holy Scripture contain various errors, interpolations, and disfigurements, and were not, as a rule, the work of the authors to whom they are ascribed—not even the Pentateuch, the original source of Judaism. Ezra, perhaps, first collected and arranged it after the Babylonian exile. The genuine writings of Moses were no longer extant, not even the Ten Commandments being now in their original form. Nevertheless, Spinoza accepted every word in the Bible as a kind of revelation, and designated all persons who figure in it as prophets. He also added, on the ground of Scripture, that the revelation of the prophets was actually made known in the first instance by visible signs. Nevertheless, he very much underrated this revelation. Moses, the prophets, and all the higher personages of the Bible had only a confused notion of God, Nature and Being; they were not philosophers, they did not avail themselves of the natural light of reason. Jesus, on the contrary, stood higher; he not only

taught a nation, but the whole of mankind on rational grounds. The Apostles, too, were to be set higher than the prophets, since they introduced a natural method of instruction, and worked not merely through signs, but also through rational conviction. As though the main effort of the Apostles, to which their whole zeal was devoted, viz., a belief in the miraculous resurrection of Jesus, were consistent with reason! It was only Spinoza's bitterness against the Jews which caused him to depreciate their spiritual property and to overrate Christianity. His sober intellect, penetrating to the eternal connection of things and events, could not of course accept miracles. The miracles of the New Testament, on the contrary, Spinoza judged much more mildly.

In spite of his condemnatory verdict on Judaism, he was struck, however, by two phenomena in it, which he did not fully understand, and which therefore he judged only superficially according to his system. These were the moral greatness of the prophets, and the superiority of the Israelite State, which in a certain measure depend on each other. Without understanding the political organisation, in which natural and moral laws, necessity and freedom work together, Spinoza explains the origin of the Jewish State, that is, of Judaism, in the following manner: When the Israelites, after deliverance from slavery in Egypt, were free from all political bondage, and restored again to their natural rights, they willingly chose God as their Lord, and transferred their rights to Him alone by formal contract and alliance. In order that the appearance of fraud might not prevail on the divine side, God permitted them to recognise His marvellous power, by virtue of which He had hitherto preserved them, and promised in future to preserve them, that is, He revealed Himself to them in His glory on Sinai; thus God became the King of Israel and the State a theo-

cracy. Faith and reality therefore had a legal character in this State, religion and civic right coincided. Whoever revolted from religion forfeited his rights as a citizen, and whoever died for religion was also a patriot. In consequence of this a pure democratic equality, the right for all to entreat God and to interpret the laws, prevailed among the Israelites. But when in the overpowering bewilderment of the revelations from Sinai they voluntarily asked Moses to receive the laws from God and to interpret them, they renounced their equality and transferred their rights to Moses. Moses accordingly from that time became God's representative for them. Hence he promulgated laws suited to the condition of the people at that time, and introduced ceremonies to remind them always of the Law and keep them from wilfulness, so that in accordance with a definite precept they should plough, sow, eat, clothe themselves, and, in a word, do everything according to the precepts of the Law. Above all, he provided that they might not act from childish and slavish fear, but from reverence of God. Also he bound them by benefits and promised them earthly prosperity in the future—all through the power and by the commandment of God. Moses combined in himself the spiritual and civil power, and was authorised to transfer both. But he preferred to transfer the civil power to his disciple Joshua in full, but not as a heritage, and the spiritual power to his brother Aaron as a heritage, but it was to be limited by the civil ruler, and was not accompanied by a grant of territory. After the death of Moses the Jewish State was neither a monarchy nor an aristocracy, nor was it a democracy, but it remained a theocracy. The family of the high-priest was God's interpreter, and the civil power, after Joshua's death, fell to single tribes or their chiefs.

This constitution offered many advantages. The



civil rulers could not turn the Law to their own advantage nor oppress the people, for the Law belonged to the sacerdotal order—the sons of Aaron and the Levites. Besides this, the people were made acquainted with the Law through the reading which was commanded at the close of each Sabbatical year, and they did not pass over with indifference any wilful transgression of public rights. The army was composed of a native militia, while foreigners, that is, mercenaries, were excluded. Thus the rulers were prevented from oppressing the people or from waging arbitrary wars. The tribes were united by religion, and the oppression of one tribe by its ruler was punished by the rest. The princes were not placed at the head through rank or privilege of blood, but through capacity and merit. Finally, the institution of prophets proved a very wholesome one. Since the constitution was theocratical, every one of blameless life was able through certain signs to represent himself as a prophet equal to Moses, and could draw the oppressed people to him in the name of God, and oppose the tyranny of the rulers. This peculiar constitution produced in the heart of the Israelites an especial patriotism, which was at the same time a religion, so that no one would betray it, leave God's kingdom, or swear the oath of allegiance to a foreigner. This love, coupled with hatred against other nations and fostered by daily service of God, became second nature to the Israelites. It strengthened them to endure everything for their country with steadfastness and courage. This constitution offered a further advantage, because the land was equally divided and no one could be permanently deprived of his portion through poverty, as restitution had to be made in the year of jubilee.

Hence there was little poverty, or such only as was endurable, for the love of one's neighbour had to be exercised with the greatest conscientiousness in order to keep the favour of God, the King.

Finally, a large space was also accorded to gladness. Thrice a year and also on other occasions the people were to assemble at festivals, not to revel in sensual enjoyments, but to accustom themselves to follow God gladly; for there is no more effectual means of guiding the hearts of men than the joy which arises from love and admiration.

After Spinoza had depicted this divine State of Israel quite as a pattern for all States, he was apparently startled at having imparted so much light to the picture, and he looked around for shade. Instead of answering the questions, whence it came that the Hebrews were so often subdued, and why their State was finally entirely destroyed, in a purely historical manner, instead of indicating that these wholesome laws remained only as a never realised ideal, Spinoza suggests a sophistic solution. Because God did not wish to make the kingdom of Israel lasting, he gave them bad laws and statutes. Spinoza supports this view by a verse which he misunderstood. These bad laws, rebellion against the sacerdotal State, coupled with bad morals, produced discontent, revolt and insurrection. At last matters went so far, that instead of the Divine King, they chose a human one, and instead of the temple, a court. Monarchy, however, only increased the disorder; it could not endure the State within the State, the high-priesthood, and therefore lowered the dignity of the latter by the introduction of strange worship. The prophets could avail nothing, because they only declaimed against the tyrants, but could not remove the cause of the evils. All things combined at last brought on the destruction of the divine State. With its destruction by the invasion of the Babylonian king, the natural rights of the Israelites were transferred to the conqueror, and they were bound to obey him and his successors by right as they had obeyed God. All the laws of Judaism—nay, the whole of Judaism, was thereby abolished, and

no longer had any significance. This was the final result of the inquiry of Spinoza in his "Theologico-political Treatise." Judaism once had a brilliant past, God had concluded an alliance with the people, had showed to them His exalted power, and given them excellent laws; but He did not intend Israel's pre-eminence to be permanent, therefore He also gave them bad laws. Consequently, Judaism had reached its end more than two thousand years before, and yet it continued its existence! Wonderful! Spinoza found the history of Israel and the constitution of the State excellent, during the barbarism of the period of the Judges, while the brilliant epochs of David and Solomon and of King Uzziah remained inexplicable to him. And, above all, the era of the second Temple, the Maccabean epoch, when the Jewish nation rose from shameful degradation to a brilliant height, and brought the heathen world itself to worship the one God and to adopt a moral life, remained to Spinoza an insoluble riddle. This shows that his whole demonstration and his analysis (schematism) cannot stand the test of criticism, but rests on false assumptions.

Spinoza might have brought the status of Judaism into extreme peril; for he not only yielded to its opponents the weapons of reason in order to combat Judaism more effectually, but he also conceded to every State and magistrate the right to suppress it and to lay a ban upon its followers, to which they ought meekly to submit. The funeral piles of the Inquisition directed against the Marranos were, according to Spinoza's system, doubly justified, because citizens have no right on rational grounds to resist the recognised religion of the State, and because it was folly to profess Judaism and to sacrifice oneself for it. But a peculiar trait of Spinoza's character now came to the service of Judaism. He loved peace and quiet too well to become a propagandist with his critical principles.



“To be in peace and quiet” was for him the ideal of life; a dislike of conflict and opposition was at once his strength and his weakness. To his life’s end he led an ideally-philosophical life; for food, clothing and shelter, he needed only so much as he could earn with his handicraft of cutting optical glasses, which his friends brought to him. He struggled against accepting the pension customarily bestowed on learned men at that time, even from his sincere and rich admirers, Simon de Vries and the Grand-Pensionary De Witt, solely that he might not fall into dependence, constraint and disquiet. From this invincible desire for philosophic calm and freedom from care he also would not decide in favour of either of the political parties, which were then setting the States-General in feverish agitation. Not even the extraordinarily exciting murder of his friend John De Witt was able to hurry him into partizanship. Spinoza bewailed his high and noble friend, but did not concern himself about his honour, in order to save him from suspicion. When the most highly cultivated German prince of his time, the Count-Palatine Karl Ludwig, who also cherished a certain affection for the Jews, offered him, “the Protestant Jew,” as he was then always called, a chair of Philosophy in the University of Heidelberg under very favourable conditions, Spinoza declined the offer. He made no concealment of the reason for his refusal; he would not surrender his quietude. From this predominant tendency on his part, or, rather, from fear of disturbance and inconveniences and from apprehension of calling his enemies down upon him, or of coming into collision with the power of the State, he refused to publish his speculations for a long time. And when at last he resolved on the pressure of his friends to send “The Theologico-Political Treatise” to the press, he did not put his name to the work, which made a new epoch in literature, and he even caused a false place of publication,

viz., Hamburg, to be printed on the title-page, in order to obliterate every trace of its real authorship. He almost denied his own offspring, in order to avoid being disturbed.

As might have been foreseen, the appearance of "The Theologico-Political Treatise" (1670), made an extraordinary stir. No one had hitherto written so distinctly and incisively concerning the relation of religion to philosophy and the power of the State, and, above all, had so condemned the accepted theories in religious matters. The clergy of all denominations were extraordinarily excited against this "godless" book, as it was called, which undervalued revealed religion. Spinoza's influential friends were not able to protect it; it was condemned by a decree of the States-General and forbidden to be sold—which only caused it to be read more eagerly. But Spinoza was afterwards the more reluctant to publish his other writings, especially his peculiar philosophical system. With all his strength of character he did not belong to those bold spirits, who undertake to be the pioneers of truth, who usher it into the world with loud voice and win it adherents, unconcerned as to whether they may have to endure a bloody or bloodless martyrdom for it. In the unselfishness of Spinoza's character and system of thought there yet lurked an element of selfishness, namely, the desire to be disturbed as little as possible in the attainment of knowledge, in the happiness of contemplation, and in reflection upon the universe and the chain of causes and effects which prevail in it. A challenge to action, effort, and resistance to opposition lay neither in Spinoza's temper, nor in his philosophy.

In this apparent harmlessness lay also the reason that his most powerful and vehemently-conducted attacks upon Judaism made no deep impression, and called forth no great commotion

in the Jewish world. There was, just at the time when Spinoza threw down the challenge to Judaism, a degree of culture and science in the Jewish-Portuguese circle, unknown either before or after; there reigned in the community of Amsterdam and its colonies a literary activity and fecundity, which might be called classical, if the merit of the literary productions had corresponded with their compass. The authors were chiefly cultivated Marranos, who had escaped from the Spanish or Portuguese prisons of the Inquisition in order to live in free Holland in their faith and with liberty of conscience. There were philosophers, physicians, mathematicians, philologists, poets, and even poetesses. Many of these Marranos who escaped to Amsterdam had gone through peculiar vicissitudes. A monk of Valencia, Fray Vincent de Rocamora (1601-84) had been very eminent in Catholic theology. He had been made confessor to the Infanta Maria, afterwards Empress of Germany and a persecutor of the Jews. One day the confessor fled from Spain, reached Amsterdam, declared himself as Isaac de Rocamora, studied medicine at the age of forty, and became a happy father of a family and president of Jewish benevolent institutions. This quondam monk, afterwards Parnass (president of the community), was also a good poet, and wrote popular Spanish and Latin verses.

Another career was that of Enrique Enriquez de Paz of Segovia (1600-1660), the Jewish Calderon. Having entered the army while young, he behaved so gallantly that he won the order of San Miguel and was made captain. Besides the sword, he also wielded the pen, with which he described comic figures and situations. Enriquez de Paz, or, as he was styled in his poetical capacity, Antonio Enriquez de Gomez, composed more than two and twenty comedies, some of which were put upon the stage at Madrid and received with as much



applause as if they had been Calderon's. But neither Mars nor the Muses succeeded in protecting him against the Inquisition; he could only escape its clutches by rapid flight. Enriquez Gomez lived a long time in France. His prolific muse celebrated Louis XIV., the Queen of France, the powerful statesman, Richelieu, and other high personages of the Court circle. He bewailed in elegies his misfortunes and the loss of his country, which he loved like a son, step-mother though she had been to him. Although blessed by fortune, Enriquez de Paz felt himself unhappy in the rude north, far from the blue mountains and mild air of Spain. He lamented thus :

“I have won for myself wealth and travelled over many seas, and heaped up ever fresh treasures by thousands; now my hair is bleached, my beard is as snowy white as my silver bars, the reward of my labours.”

He also lived in France as a Christian, but proclaimed his sympathy with Judaism, while he mourned in elegiac verses the martyrdom of Lope de Vera y Alarcon. Finally he settled down in the asylum of the Marranos, whilst his effigy was burnt on the funeral pile at Seville. There had been again a great Auto-da-Fé (1660) of sixty Marranos, of whom four were first strangled and then burned, whilst three were burned alive. Effigies of escaped Marranos were borne along in procession and thrown into the flames—amongst them that of the knight of San Miguel, the writer of comedies. A new-Christian, who was present at this horrible sight, and who soon after escaped to Amsterdam, met Gomez in the street and exclaimed to him excitedly: “Ah! Señor Gomez! I saw your effigy burning on the funeral pile at Seville!” “Well,” he replied, “they are welcome to have it.” Amongst his numerous secular poems, Enriquez Gomez also left behind him one of Jewish national interest in celebration of the giant-Judge Samson. The laurels, which

the older Spanish poet, Miguel Silveyra, whom he admired and with whom he was connected by the tie of national affinity, had won by his Epic poem, "The Maccabee," haunted him until he had brought out a companion piece. To the blind hero, who was about to avenge himself on the Philistines by his death, Gomez assigned verses which touched his own heart :

"I die for Thy holy word, for Thy religion,  
For Thy doctrine, Thy hallowed commandments,  
For the nation adopted by Thy choice,  
For Thy sublime ordinance I go to die."

Another point of view is presented by two exiled Marranos of this period, father and son, the two Pensos, the one rich in possessions and charity, and the other in poetical gifts. Both probably sprang from Espejo, in the province of Cordova, escaped from the fury of the Inquisition, and at last settled down after many changes of residence as Jews in Amsterdam. Isaac Penso (died 1683) the father, was a banker and a father to the poor. He spent a tithe of the income from his property on the poor, and distributed, up to his death, 40,000 gulden. His decease was felt with deep regret in the community of Amsterdam. His son (Felice) Joseph Penso, also called De la Vega, from his mother's family (1650-1703), was a rich merchant, and turned his attention to poetry. Already, when a youth of seventeen, he awoke the long-slumbering echo of the new-Hebrew poesy, and caused it to strike its highest note. Joseph Penso boldly undertook a most difficult task; he composed a Hebrew drama. Since Immanuel Romi had written his witty tales in verse, the new-Hebrew muse had been stricken with sterility, for which the increasing troubles of the times were not alone to blame. Moses da Rieti and the poetic school of Salonica composed verses, but did not write poetry. Even the greatest of Jewish poets, Gebirol and Jehuda

Halevi, had only produced lyric and didactic poetry, and had not thought of drama. Joseph Penso, inspired by the poetical air of Spain, the land of his birth, where Lope de Vega and Calderon sang melodious verses that were heard beside the litany of the monks and the cry of the sacrifice, transferred the Spanish artistic form to the new-Hebrew poetry. Penso happily imitated the various kinds of metre and strophe of European poetry in the language of David and Isaiah.

One ought not, indeed, to judge Joseph Penso's drama, but endeavour to forget that long before him Shakespeare had created life-like forms and interests. For, measured by these, Penso's dramatic monologue and dialogue seem puerile. However free from blame his versification is, the invention is too poor, and the ideas commonplace. A king, who takes a serious view of his responsibilities as ruler, is led aside from the path, now through his own impulses (Yezer), now through his coquettish wife (Isha), and now through Satan. But three other opposing forces endeavour to lead him in the right way—his own judgment (Sechel), divine inspiration (Hashgacha), and an angel. These are the characters who act in Penso's drama "The Captives of Hope" (Asire ha-Tikvah). But if one takes into consideration the object which Penso had in view, viz., to hold up a mirror to the Marrano youths settled at Amsterdam, who had been used to Spanish licentiousness, and to picture to them the high value of a virtuous mode of life, the performance of the youthful poet is not to be despised. Joseph Penso de la Vega composed a large number of verses in Spanish, occasional poetry, moral and philosophical reflections, and eulogies on princes. His novels were popular; they were entitled "The Dangerous Courses" (los Rumbos peligrosos).

Marrano poets of mediocre ability were so nu-



merous at this time in Amsterdam, that one of them, the Minister of Spain in the Netherlands, Manuel Belmonte (Isaac Nuñez), who was appointed Count-Palatine, founded an academy of poetry. Poetical works were to be handed in, and as judges of prizes he appointed the former confessor, De Rocamora, and another Marrano, who composed Latin verses, Isaac Gomez de Sosa. The latter was so much enraptured at Penso's Hebrew drama, that he triumphantly proclaimed, in Latin verse:

"Now is it at length attained! The Hebrew Muse marches in on high-heeled buskin safe and sound. With the measured stride of poetry she is conducted auspiciously by Joseph—sprung from that race which still is mostly in captivity. Lo! a clear beam of hope shines afresh, that now even the stage may be opened to the sacred song. Yet why do I praise him? The poet is celebrated by his own poetry, and his own work proclaims the praise of the master."

Another of the friends of the Jewish dramatist was Nicolas de Oliver y Fullana (Daniel Jehuda), who was a poet, and a colonel in the Spanish service; he was knighted, entered the service of Holland, and was an accurate cartographer and cosmographer. There were also Joseph Szemach (Sameh) Arias, a man of high military rank, who translated into Spanish the work of the historian Josephus against Apion, which controverted the old prejudices and falsehoods against the Jews. This polemic was not superfluous even at this time. Of the Jewish Marrano poetesses, it will suffice to name the fair and gifted Isabel Correa (Rebecca), who twined a wreath of various poems, and translated the Italian popular drama, "The True Shepherd" (Pastor Fido, by Guarini) into beautiful Spanish verse. Isabel was the second wife of the poet-warrior, De Oliver y Fullana.

Of a far different stamp was the Marrano, Thomas de Pinedo (Isaac, 1614-1679) of Portugal, who was educated in a Jesuit college at Madrid. He

was more at home in classical than in Jewish antiquity, and applied himself to a branch of study little cultivated in Spain in his time, that of ancient geography. He, too, was driven out of Spain by the Inquisition, and deemed himself fortunate to have escaped with a whole skin. The philologist, De Pinedo, also dwelt later on in Amsterdam, where he printed his comprehensive work. He composed his own epitaph in Latin.

We must not leave unmentioned a personage celebrated at that time perhaps beyond his deserts, Jacob Jehuda Leon (Templo, 1603-1671). He also, if not a Marrano, yet was of Marrano descent, and resided first at Middelburg, then at Amsterdam, and was, properly speaking, more an artist than a man of science. Leon actually made the attempt to portray the First Temple and its vessels, as they are described in the Bible and the Talmud. He executed a model of the Temple on a reduced scale (3 yards square,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in height), and added a concise and clear description in Spanish and Hebrew. A work like this, of so unusual a character, attracted extraordinary notice at the time when every kind of antiquarian learning, especially Biblical, was highly prized. The government of Holland and Zealand gave the author the privilege of copyright. Duke August of Brunswick, and his wife Elizabeth, wished to possess a German translation of Leon's description, and commissioned Professor John Saubert, of Helmstädt, to undertake it. But while he was corresponding with the author for the production of a thoroughly genuine and perfect work, he was anticipated by another man who brought out a German translation at Hanover. This circumstance caused great annoyance to Professor Saubert. Templo, as Leon and his posterity were surnamed from his work in connection with the Temple, also engaged in controversies with Christian ecclesiastics on

Judaism and Christianity, and published a translation of the Psalms in Spanish.

In this cultivated circle of Spinoza's contemporaries there were also two men who lived alternately at Hamburg and Amsterdam, David Coen de Lara and Dionysius Musaphia, both distinguished as philologists, but not for much besides. With their knowledge of Latin and Greek they explained the dialect of the Talmud, and corrected errors which had crept into the earlier Talmudical lexicons. David de Lara (1610-1674), was also a preacher and writer on morals; but his efforts in that direction are but of small value. He associated too much with the Hamburg preacher, Esdras Edzardus, who was bent on the conversion of the Jews. The latter spread the false report that De Lara was almost a Christian before he died. Dionysius (Benjamin) Musaphia (born about 1616, died at Amsterdam, 1676) a physician and student of natural science, was up to the date of the monarch's death in the service of the Danish King Christian VI. He was also a philosopher, and allowed himself to question various things in the Talmud and the Bible. Nevertheless he held the office of Rabbi at Amsterdam in his old age.

Much more important than the whole of this circle was Balthasar Orobio de Castro (1620-1687). He also sprang from Marrano parents, who secretly continued to observe the Day of Atonement, in that they abstained from food and drink on that day. In this meagre conception of Judaism, Orobio was brought up. Endowed with a clear intellect, he studied obsolete and antiquated philosophy, as it was still taught in the Spanish schools, and became Professor of Metaphysics in the University of Salamanca. Such fossilised philosophy, however, appears neither to have satisfied him nor to have brought him sufficient means of subsistence, for he betook himself in riper years to the study of medicine. In this pursuit Orobio was more successful; he gained a reputation



at Seville, was physician to the Duke of Medina-Celi, and also to a family in high favour with the Court, and amassed considerable wealth. He was already a happy husband and father, when the Inquisition cast its baleful glance upon him. A servant, whom he had punished for theft, informed against him. Orobio was seized, accused of Judaism, and thrown into a narrow, gloomy dungeon, where he had not even room to move, and in which he spent three years (about 1655-1658).

At first he filled up his time with philosophical subtleties, as then pursued at the Spanish universities. He undertook to defend a thesis, acting at the same time in imagination as the opponent, who shattered it by objections, as well as the part of the president, who sums up and sifts the arguments. By degrees his mind grew so weary that he often asked himself, "Am I really Don Balthasar Orobio, who went about in the streets of Seville, and lived in comfort with his family?" His whole past life came back to him like a dream, and he believed he had been born in prison and must also die there. But the tribunal of the Inquisition brought a change once more into his empty dream-life. He was ushered into a dark vault, which was lighted only by a dull lamp. He could hardly distinguish the judge, the secretary, and the executioner, who were about to deal with his case. Having been again admonished to confess his heresy and transgression, and having again denied it, the hangman undressed him, bound him with cords, which were fastened to a hook in the wall, brought his body into a swinging movement between the ceiling and the floor, and drew the cords so tight, that the blood spurted from his nails. His feet, moreover, were strongly bound to a small ladder, the steps of which were studded with spikes. Whilst he was being tortured, he was frequently admonished to make confession, and was threatened, in case he persisted in denial, with

the infliction of still more horrible pains, for which, though they caused his death, he would have to thank his own obstinacy, not the tribunal. However, he survived the pangs of torture, was taken back to prison to allow his wounds to heal, then condemned to wear the shirt of shame (San-Benito), and was finally banished from Spain. He betook himself to Toulouse, where he became a professor of medicine in the University. Although respected in his new position, Orobio could not long endure the hypocrisy. He abandoned his disguise, went to Amsterdam, publicly professed the Jewish religion, and assumed the name of Isaac (about 1666). No wonder that he became a bitter opponent of Christianity, which he had learnt to know thoroughly. But he was also an adherent of Judaism from conviction, and proved himself a courageous and able champion of the religion of his fathers, and dealt such powerful blows to Christianity as few before him had done, so that a distinguished Protestant theologian (Van Limborch) felt compelled to reply to Orobio's attacks.

All these cultivated youths and men, the soldier-poets Enriquez Gomez, Nicholas de Oliver y Fullana, Joseph Arias, and the writers Joseph Penso, Thomas de Pinedo, Jacob Leon, David de Lara and Dionysius Musaphia, knew of Spinoza's attacks upon Judaism, and undoubtedly read his "Theologico - Political Treatise." Isaac Orobio associated with Spinoza. And yet the blows with which the latter strove to shake Judaism did not cause the former to waver in his conviction. This is the more remarkable, as simultaneously from another side Judaism was covered with shame, or what comes to the same thing, its followers everywhere in the East and West, with exceptions, became slaves to a delusion which made them the ridicule of the world, and brought on them for the first time the darkness of the Middle Ages.

Without dreaming of it, Spinoza possessed in the East an ally, diametrically his opposite, who worked hard for the destruction of Judaism, and succeeded in throwing the whole Jewish race into a turmoil, which caused them for a long while to become the victims of a delusion. Sabbataï Zevi was at once Spinoza's opposite and ally—and he possessed many more admirers than the philosopher of Amsterdam, became for a space the idol of the Jewish race, and has secret adherents even to the present time. Sabbataï Zevi (born 9th Ab, 1626, died 1676), of Smyrna, in Asia Minor, was of Spanish descent, and became the originator of a new Messianic frenzy, the founder of a new sect. He owed the attachment which he inspired when still quite a youth, not to his qualities of mind, but as often happened with pretenders, to his external appearance and attractive manner. He was tall, well made, had a fine dark beard and hair, and a pleasant voice, which could win hearts by speech and still more by song. But his mind was enveloped in a cloud arising from the predominance of fancy; he had an enthusiastic temperament and an inclination to what was strange, especially to solitude. In boyhood Sabbataï Zevi avoided company and the games of his playmates, sought solitary places and avoided all that has charms for the young. He was educated in the current method. In early youth he studied the Talmud in the lecture-room of the veteran Joseph Eskapha, a staunch Talmudist of Smyrna, but did not attain to any great proficiency in it. So much the more was he attracted by the confused jumble of the Kabbala. Once introduced into the labyrinths of the Zohar he felt himself at home therein, guided by the clue of Lurya's interpretation. Sabbataï Zevi shared the opinion generally prevailing at the time that the Kabbala could only be acquired by means of asceticism. He therefore mortified his



body and bathed very frequently in the sea, day and night, winter and summer. Perhaps it was from the sea-bathing that his body derived the peculiar fragrance which his worshippers strongly maintained that it possessed. In early manhood he presented a contrast to his companions because he felt no attraction to the female sex. According to custom Sabbataï Zevi married early, but avoided his young, good-looking wife so pertinaciously, that she applied for a divorce, which he willingly granted her. The same thing happened again with a second wife.

This strange aversion to marriage in the warm climate of the East, his assiduous study of the Kabbala, and his ascetic mode of life, attracted attention. Disciples sought him and were introduced by him to the Kabbala. When twenty years old he was already the master of a small circle. He attached disciples to himself partly by his earnest and retiring manner, which excluded all familiarity, partly by his musical voice, with which he used to sing in Spanish, the Kabbalistic verses composed by Lurya or himself. Another circumstance must be added. When Sultan Ibrahim ascended the throne a violent war broke out between Turkey and Venice, which made the trade of the Levant unsafe in the capital. Several European, that is, Dutch and English, mercantile houses in consequence transferred their ledgers to Smyrna. This hitherto insignificant city thereby acquired increased importance as a trade-mart. The Jews of Smyrna, who had been poor, profited by this commercial change, and thereby amassed great riches, first as agents of large houses and afterwards as independent firms. Mordecai Zevi, Sabbataï's father, from the Morea, who was originally poor, became the agent for an English house in Smyrna, executed its commissions with strict honesty, enjoyed the confidence of the principals, and became a wealthy man. His in-

creasing prosperity was attributed by the blind father to the merit of his Kabbala-loving son, to whom he paid such great reverence, that the report of it spread abroad. Sabbataï was regarded as a young saint. The more clear-seeing declared him on account of his extravagance to be mad. In the house of his English principal Mordecai Zevi often heard the approach of the Millennium discussed, and how either he himself or some of his people belonged to the enthusiasts for the Apocalypse of the Fifth Monarchy. The year 1666 was designated by these enthusiasts as the Messianic year, which was to bring renewed splendour to the Jews and see their return again to Jerusalem. These expectations, the existence of which he had discovered while in the English house, were communicated by Mordecai Zevi to the members of his family, none of whom listened to them more attentively than Sabbataï, already entangled in the maze of the Luryanian Kabbala, and who regarded those enthusiastic hopes as capable of realisation. What if he himself were called upon to usher in this time of redemption? Had he not, at an earlier age than any one before him, penetrated into the heart of the Kabbala? And who could be more worthy of this call than one deeply immersed in its mysteries?

The central point of the later Kabbala was the most intense expectation of the Messiah; Lurya, Vitalis, and their disciples and followers proclaimed anew, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." A peculiar work of redemption was to precede and accompany it—the redemption of the scattered elements of the original soul (Nizuzot) from the fetters of original evil, the demon-nature (Keliphot), which taking a hold on men through the fall of the angels or divine elements, held them in captivity, impeded their upward flight, and necessitated the perpetual transmigration of souls from body to body. As soon as the evil spirit was either consumed,

annihilated, rendered powerless, or at least sufficient in itself without admixture of the Divine, then the Kabbalistic order (Olam ha-Tikkun) would attain life, the streams of mercy would pour forth without let or hindrance upon the lower world through the channels of the Sephirot, and fructify and miraculously enkindle it. This work of redemption could be accomplished by every truly pious man (Zaddik), who having an enlightened soul, and being initiated in the Kabbala, stands in close union with the world of spirits, comprehends the connection between the upper and lower world, and fulfils all religious exercises (Kevanot) with concentrated devotion and with regard to the higher influence. Still more effectually will the Messiah, the son of David, accomplish the annihilation of demoniacal powers and the restoration of lost souls, or rather the collection of the scattered universal soul of Adam. For to the Messiah, in whom dwells a pure, immaculate soul, are unfolded the mysterious depths of the higher worlds, essences, and the divine creation, even the Divine Being himself. The Messiah of the seed of David was to a certain extent to be the incarnate original man (Adam Kadmon) and part of the Godhead.

This Luryanian mysticism dazzled the bewildered brain of the Smyrna youth, and produced such confusion and giddiness, that he thought he could easily usher in this spiritual redemption which was to be immediately followed by that of the body. In what manner this feeling of ecstasy, the wish to play the part of a Messiah, buds and breaks forth in enthusiastic minds, is an impenetrable riddle. Sabbataï Zevi was not the first of those who have thought that with mystical glamour they could reverse the whole order of the world, and have even partly succeeded in their endeavours. Certain it is that the extravagant notions entertained by Jews and Christians with regard to the near approach of the



time of grace worked upon Sabbataï's weak brain. That book of falsehoods, the Zohar, declared that in the year of the world 5408 (1648) the era of redemption would begin to dawn, and precisely in that year Sabbataï revealed himself to his train of youthful companions as the Messianic redeemer. It happened in an apparently insignificant manner, but the mode of revelation was of great import for the initiated. Sabbataï Zevi uttered the full name of God in four letters in Hebrew (Jhwh, the Tetragrammaton) without hesitation, although this was strictly prohibited in the Talmud and by the long usage of countless ages. The Kabbalists attached all sorts of mystical importance to this prohibition. During the dispersion of Israel, the perfection of God Himself was to a certain extent destroyed, on account of the prevailing sinfulness of men and the degradation of the Jewish people, since the Deity could not carry out His moral plan. The higher and lower worlds were divided by a deep gulf from one another; the four letters of God's name were parted asunder. With the Messianic period of redemption the moral order of the world, as God had laid it down in the plan of the universe, and also the perfection and unity of God would be restored. When Sabbataï Zevi permitted himself to pronounce the name of God in full, he thereby proclaimed that the time of grace had begun with him.

Nevertheless, at the age of two and twenty, despite his pious and mystical mode of life, he had still too little authority for the Rabbis to allow to pass unnoticed an infraction of the existing order of things, which might lead to further inroads. As soon as Zevi's pretensions became known some years later, the college and his teacher Joseph Eskapha, its head, laid him and his followers under a ban; and many bickerings ensued in consequence in the community, the particulars of which are not known.

Finally he and his disciples were banished from Smyrna (about 1651). The Messianic delusion appeared thereby to have been extinguished, but it smouldered on and broke out again, about fifteen years later, in a bright consuming flame. This persecution, far from terrifying Sabbataï Zevi, first gave him a proper sense of his own dignity. The idea of a suffering Messiah had already been transplanted from Christianity to Judaism, so that the view had been accepted that humiliation was the precursor of the Messiah's exaltation and glorification. Sabbataï believed in himself, and his disciples, amongst whom was Moses Pinheiro, a man of mature age, highly esteemed for scientific acquirements, shared this belief with tenacity. True, if the Messiah had been obliged to beg his way through the world, his illusion would not have long held its ground. But Sabbataï was richly provided with means, he could maintain his independence and his presumed dignity, and moreover win adherents to his cause. At first, however, he kept himself in concealment, did not say much about his Messiahship, and thereby escaped ridicule. Whither he betook himself after his banishment from his native city is not quite certain; probably however to the Turkish capital, where dwelt the largest Jewish community, amongst whom were so many clean and unclean elements, that everyone could find companions for plans or adventures. Here he made the acquaintance of a preacher, Abraham Yachini, who confirmed him in his delusion. Yachini stood in high repute, on account of his talent as a preacher. He was a needy and artful fellow, and made neat transcriptions for a Dutch Christian, who dabbled in Oriental literature. From selfish motives or a delight in mystification, and to confirm Sabbataï Zevi in his delusion, Yachini palmed off upon him an apocryphal manuscript in ancient characters, which appa-

rently bore older testimony to Sabbataï's Messiahship.

"I, Abraham, was shut up for forty years in a cave, and wondered that the time of miracles did not make its appearance. Then a voice replied to me, 'A son shall be born in the year of the world 5386 (1626), and be called Sabbataï. He shall quell the great dragon: he is the true Messiah, and shall wage war without weapons.'"

This document, which the young fanatic himself appears to have taken for a genuine revelation, became later on the source of many mystifications and impostures. However, it appeared inadvisable both to the dupe and those who imposed upon him that he should appear in Constantinople. Salonica, which always paid homage to mysticism, seemed a more suitable field for Kabbalistic extravagances. Here, therefore, Sabbataï resided for some time, gained adherents, and came forward with greater boldness. Here he performed one of his favourite scenes, by which he afterwards worked upon the imagination of the Kabbalists. He prepared a solemn festival, invited his friends to it, sent for the sacred book (Torah) and intimated to those present, that he was about to celebrate his mystical marriage with it. In the language of the Kabbala this meant that the Torah, the daughter of heaven, was to be united in an indissoluble union with the Messiah, the son of heaven, or En-Soph. This scene, however, displeased the discreet Rabbis of Salonica, and they decreed his banishment from this city also. Thence he betook himself to the Morea, probably to relatives and friends of his father, and resided for some time at Athens, where at that time there was a Jewish community. But when the Jews of this place heard of the sentence pronounced upon him, they gave him no encouragement. This opposition, however, far from discouraging him, only served to make him bolder; he delighted in regarding his sufferings as necessary for the glorification of the Messiah.



At last, after long wandering, a prospect of realising his dream presented itself at Cairo. In the Egyptian capital there had long been a Jewish mint-master and tax-farmer, who bore the title of Saraph-Bashi, and whose functions were similar to those of the Arabarchs at Alexandria in earlier ages. At that time (after 1656) the office was held by Raphael Joseph Chelebi of Aleppo, a man of great wealth and open-handed benevolence, but also of unspeakable credulity and an ineradicable propensity to mysticism and ascetism. Fifty learned Talmudists and Kabbalists were entertained by him and dined at his table. Everyone who sought his compassion found help and relief in his need. While he rode in the state chariot and appeared in splendid robes, he wore sackcloth underneath, fasted and bathed much, and frequently suffered from delusions at night. Samuel Vital, a son of Chayim Calabrese, conducted his constant penances according to the Kabbalistic precepts of Lurya (Tikun Lurya). These were intended, as has been already stated, to hasten the imminent coming of the Messiah. To be in Cairo and not to make Raphael Joseph's acquaintance was an inconceivable course for a Kabbalist. Sabbataï Zevi thus also came into his circle, and won his confidence the sooner, as, owing to his independent position, he did not desire anything of him. He appears to have partially revealed his Messianic plans to Raphael. He had, however, grown older, maturer and wiser, and knew already how to adapt himself to men. The Apocalyptic and Messianic year, 1666, was drawing nearer; and it was therefore important for him to secure the auspicious moment.

He accordingly betook himself to Jerusalem, perhaps under the delusion that in the Holy Land a miracle would take place, which would confirm him in his greatness. The community at Jerusalem was at that time in every way poor and wretched.

Besides being ground down by the oppressions and extortions of Turkish officials, their supplies from Europe were exhausted on account of the constant massacres of the Jews in Poland. The consequence was that the best men emigrated, leaving the government of the community to thorough-going Kabbalists, devoted adherents of Lurya and Vital, or to a licentious set, who followed the impulses of a most bare-faced selfishness. There were at that time very few men of repute and authority in Jerusalem. A Marrano physician appears to have stood at their head named Jacob Zemach, who had leapt, so to speak, in one bound from the Portuguese church into the nest of Kabbalists at Safet, and there, as also later at Jerusalem, had become an unconscious tool of the mysticism taught by Vital. With him there worked in the same direction Abraham Amigo, a Talmudist of the second or third rank. A man of some importance, to be sure, was Jacob Chages (1620—1674), who had migrated from Italy to Jerusalem, and who wrote good Spanish. Chages, however, had no official position, but lived the life of a recluse in a school, which two brothers named Vega, of Leghorn, had founded and maintained for him. The thoughtless credulity of the people of Jerusalem of that time is instanced by the gross deception practised upon them by one of their alms-collecting missionaries, Baruch Gad, which they, both the learned and unlearned, not only credited, but swore to be true. Baruch Gad had gone on a begging journey to Persia, where he pretended that he had experienced many adventures, and been saved by a Jew of the tribe of Napthali, who had also given him a Kabbalistic letter from one of the "Sons of Moses" at the miraculous river Sabbation. Therein was contained much about the riches, splendour and daily miracles of the Sons of Moses, and it was said that these were momentarily awaiting the commencement of the

Messianic epoch as a signal for breaking out. This story, certified by a circular, was brought by Baruch Gad to Jerusalem, where it found unlimited credence. When the community of Jerusalem had fallen into great want in consequence of the Cossack massacre, ten so-called Rabbis, with Jacob Zemach at their head, sent over to Reggio to their envoy Nathan Spira, of Jerusalem, a copy of this document from the Sons of Moses, which was kept in careful custody. It was to serve as a bait to draw more abundant alms.

The miracle which Sabbataï Zevi was expecting for himself in the holy city was already present in the credulity and mania for miracles on the part of the people of Jerusalem, who were inclined, like the lowest savages, to accept any absurd message as a divine revelation, if only it was brought before them in the right manner. At first the enthusiast of Smyrna kept himself quiet and gave no offence. He lived according to the precepts of the Kabbala, imposed on himself the severest chastisements, and often stayed by the graves of pious men in order to draw down their spirits to him. Thereby, aided by his pleasing, attractive, and reverential behaviour and taciturn manner, he gradually gathered round him a circle of adherents who had blind faith in him. One of his devoted followers related of him with credible simplicity that Sabbataï Zevi shed floods of tears in prayer and sang the Psalms the whole night long with his melodious voice, while he paced up and down the room now in shorter, now in longer strides. All his conduct was out of the ordinary groove. He was also wont to sing coarse love songs in Spanish, with a mystical meaning, about the fair emperor's daughter, Melisselda, with her coral lips and milk-white skin, as she rose from her bath. But Sabbataï used other means to win hearts. As often as he showed himself in the streets he distributed sweet-



meats of all sorts to the children, who, in consequence, ran after him, and this also gained for him the favour of their mothers.

An incident brought his eccentric ideas nearer to their realisation. The community at Jerusalem was once more sentenced by one of the Pachas or some minor official to one of those oppressive exactions which frequently carried torture or death in their train. The impoverished members rested their hopes simply and solely on Raphael Joseph Chelebi at Cairo, who was known to have the means and inclination to succour his afflicted brethren, the saints at Jerusalem. A messenger had to be sent to him, and Sabbataï Zevi was universally regarded as the most fitting for this embassy, particularly as he was a favourite with the Saraph-Bashi. He undertook this task the more willingly because he hoped thereby to get the opportunity of playing the part of saviour to the holy city. His worshippers also date from this journey to Egypt the beginning of his miraculous power, and, above all, assert that he accomplished many miracles at sea. Sabbataï, however, did not travel by water, but by land, through Hebron and Gaza—in fact, he joined a caravan through the desert. He excited so much attention that all the Jews of Hebron kept watch the whole night at the house where he lodged, in order to observe his conduct and demeanour. When he arrived at Cairo, he immediately received from Chelebi the sum required for the ransom of the community at Jerusalem, and, besides, an extraordinarily favourable opportunity of being able to confirm his Messianic dreams.

During the massacre of the Jews in Poland by Chmielnicki, a Jewish orphan girl of about six, was found by some Christians and taken into a nunnery. The parents were dead, a brother had been driven to Amsterdam, the whole community broken up and put to flight, and no one troubled himself about

the forsaken child, so that the nuns of the convent regarded the foundling as a soul brought to them, and gave her a Christian education in the cloister. The impressions, however, which the orphan had received in the house of her parents were so lively, that Christianity found no entrance into her heart; she remained faithful to Judaism. Nevertheless her soul was nourished through surrounding influences by fantastic dreams, and her thoughts took an eccentric direction. Thus she developed into a lovely girl, and longed to escape from the walls of the cloister. One day she was found by some Jews, who had again settled in the place, in the Jewish cemetery. Astonished at finding a beautiful girl of sixteen lightly clad in such a position, they questioned her, and received answer that she was of Jewish extraction, and had been brought up in a convent. The night before she had been bodily seized by her father's ghost and carried out of bed to the cemetery. She showed the women, in support of her statement, nail-marks on her body, which she said came from the hands of her father. She appears to have learnt in the convent the art of producing scars on her limbs. The Jews thought it dangerous to keep a girl who had escaped from the convent in their midst, and sent her to Amsterdam. There she found her brother again. Eccentric by nature and excited by the change which had taken place in her fortunes, she continually repeated the words that she was destined to be the wife of the Messiah who was soon to appear. After she had lived some years in Amsterdam under the name of Sarah, she came—it is not known on what pretext—by way of Frankfort-on-the-Maine to Leghorn. There, as credible witnesses aver, she put her charms to an immoral use, and yet remained in the fixed idea that she was dedicated to the Messiah, and could contract no other marriage. The strange history of this Polish

girl circulated amongst the Jews, and penetrated even to Cairo. Sabbataï Zevi, who had heard of it, gave out that a Polish-Jewish maiden had likewise been promised to him in a dream as his spiritual wife. He sent a messenger to Leghorn and had Sarah brought to Cairo.

By her fantastical, free self-confident behaviour and by her beauty, Sarah made a peculiar impression upon Sabbataï and his companions. He himself was thereby firmly convinced of his Messianic character. To Sabbataï and his friends also the immoral life of this Polish adventuress was not unknown. But this also was said to be a Messianic dispensation; he had been directed, like the prophet Hosea, to marry an unchaste wife. No one was so happy as Raphael Joseph Chelebi, because at his house the bride of the Messiah was introduced and married. Moreover he placed his wealth at the disposal of Sabbataï Zevi, and became his most influential follower. The warm adhesion of so dignified, respected, and powerful a man brought many believers to Sabbataï. It was rightly said of him that he had come to Egypt as a messenger, and returned as the Messiah. For from this second residence at Cairo dates his entrance on a public career. Sarah also, the fair bride of the Messiah, brought him many disciples. Through her a romantic, licentious element entered into the fantastic career of the Messiah of Smyrna. Her beauty and free manner of life attracted youths and grown-up men, who had no sympathy with the mystical movement. With a larger following than when he started, Sabbataï returned to Palestine, taking two talismans with him, which had more permanent effect than Kabbalistic means—Sarah's influence and Chelebi's money. At Gaza he found a third confederate, who smoothed the path for him still more effectually.

There was then living at Jerusalem a man named



Elisha Levi, who had migrated thither from Germany. The Jews of the Holy City despatched him to all the ends of the world with begging letters. Whilst journeying in North Africa, Amsterdam, Hamburg and Poland, his son, Nathan Benjamin Levi (1644-1680) was left to himself or to the perverse method of education of that time. He developed, in the school of Jacob Chages, into a youth with a superficial knowledge of the Talmud, learnt Kabbalistic scraps, and obtained a facility in the high-sounding, but hollow and nonsensical Rabbinical style of the period, which concealed poverty of thought beneath its verbiage. The pen was his faithful instrument, and replaced the gift of speech, in which he had little facility. This youth was suddenly transferred from pressing poverty to opulence. A rich Portuguese, Samuel Lisbona, who had moved from Damascus to Gaza, asked Jacob Chages to recommend him a husband for his beautiful, but one-eyed daughter, and the latter suggested to him his disciple, Nathan Benjamin. Thus he entered a rich house, and in consequence of his change of fortune, lost all reserve, if indeed he ever had any. When Sabbataï Zevi came to Gaza on his way back from Cairo with a large train of followers, already openly professing to be the Messiah, and had crowds gathering about him, Nathan Ghazati (*i. e.*, of Gaza) also entered into close relationship with him. In what way their mutual acquaintance and attachment arose is not explained. Sabbataï's disciples declared that Nathan had a share in the ancient writing which had been dug out of the ground, wherein Zevi's Messiahship was testified. It is probably nearer the truth, that Sabbataï palmed off the spurious document upon Nathan Ghazati which Abraham Yachini had handed over to him, in order to convince Ghazati of his mission. At any rate Nathan became his most zealous adherent, but

whether from conviction or from a desire to play a prominent part, can no longer be discerned in this story, in which simple faith, self-deception and wilful imposture, border so closely on one another.

After Nathan Ghazati and Sabbataï had become acquainted, the former a youth of twenty, the latter a man of forty, prophetic revelations followed close upon one another. Ghazati, for instance, professed to be the risen Elijah, who was to pave the way for the Messiah. He gave out that he had received a call on a certain day (probably on the eve of the Pentecost, 1665); that in a year and a few months the Messiah would show himself in his glory, would take the Sultan captive without arms, only with music, and establish the dominion of Israel over all the nations of the earth. The Messianic age was to begin in the year 1666. This revelation was proclaimed everywhere in writing by the pretended prophet of Gaza, who added thereto wild fantasies and exciting addresses. He wrote to Raphael Joseph informing him that he had received the money sent from him, that he would not err in believing in Sabbataï; the latter would certainly in a year and some months make the Sultan his subject and lead him about as a captive. He, however, would intrust the dominion to him until he should conquer the other nations without bloodshed, only warring against Germany, the enemy of the Jews. Then the Messiah would betake himself to the banks of the river Sabbation, and there espouse the daughter of the great prophet, Moses, who at the age of thirteen, would be exalted as queen, while Sarah was to be her slave. Finally, he was to lead back the ten tribes to the Holy Land, and to ride upon a lion, with a seven-headed dragon in its jaws. The more exaggerated and absurd these prophetic vapourings of Nathan were, the more credence did they find. A veritable fit of intoxication took possession of nearly all the Jews

of Jerusalem and the neighbouring communities. With a prophet, who had formerly been a shy youth and now proclaimed so great a message, and a Messiah, who was more profoundly versed in the Kabbala than Chayim Vital, who could venture to doubt any longer of the approach of the time of grace? Those who shook their heads at this rising imposture were laughed to scorn by the Sabbatians.

The Rabbinical heads of the Jerusalem community were indeed unfavourably struck by this Messianic movement, and sought to stifle it at its birth. They were initially prejudiced against Sabbataï because he stood in the foreground and put them in the shade. He is said to have distributed the money which he brought with him from Egypt according to his own discretion, and in the division to have unduly favoured his own followers. Jacob Chages and his college threatened him with the heaviest punishment if he should persist in his course. Sabbataï Zevi appears, however, to have cared little for this, especially as opposition could have no effect, seeing that the community was on his side. Even Moses Galante, the son-in-law of Jacob Chages, already esteemed as an authority in the Holy Land, regarded him with respect, although he did not, as he afterwards declared, believe in him unconditionally. However, Sabbataï Zevi saw clearly that Jerusalem was not the right place for his plans, for the Rabbis would place obstacles in his way. Nathan Ghazati thereupon proclaimed in an ecstasy that Jerusalem had lost its importance as the sacred city, and that Gaza had taken its place. At Smyrna, his native city—an important gathering-place for Europeans and Asiatics—Sabbataï thought he could obtain greater success. His rich brothers had already prepared a good reception for him by the distribution of money amongst the poor and needy, and Nathan's extravagant prophetic mes-



sage had kindled the imagination of the people. But before he left Jerusalem, Sabbataï took care to despatch active missionaries of a fanatical and fraudulent character in advance, to predict his Messianic appearance, to excite men's minds, and to fill them with his name. Sabbataï Raphael, a beggar and impostor from the Morea, enlarged in mountebank fashion on the Messiah's greatness; and a German Kabbalist, Matathias Bloch, did the same in blind simplicity.

Thus it came to pass that when Sabbataï Zevi left Jerusalem—of his own accord, as he pretended, banished, as others said—he was at once received in triumph in the large Asiatic community of Aleppo. Still greater was the homage paid him in his native city (autumn 1665). Nothing more was thought of the earlier sentence passed upon him. He was accompanied by a man of Jerusalem, Samuel Primo, who became his private secretary, and one of his most zealous recruiting agents. Samuel Primo understood the art of investing trifles with an air of official seriousness and by a flowery style to give the importance of a world-wide occurrence to the Messianic imposture. But he remained sober in the midst of the ever-increasing fanaticism, and gave aim and direction to the enthusiasts. Primo appears to have heralded Sabbataï's fame from conviction; he had a secret plan which was to be accomplished through the Messiah. He appears to have made use of Sabbataï more than to have been employed by him. Sabbataï had tact enough not to announce himself all at once at Smyrna as the Messiah; but he commanded the believing multitude not to speak of it until his hour should come. But this reserve, combined with other circumstances—the ranting letters of Nathan, the arrival of some men of Jerusalem who brought him the homage of the holy city (though without being commissioned to do so), the

heaviest chastisements which the people inflicted on themselves, in order to atone for their sins and become worthy of the coming of the Messiah—all this worked upon the minds of the multitude, and in their keen excitement they could scarcely wait for the day of his revelation. He had, moreover, the Kabbalists on his side through his mystical utterances. At length Sabbataï Zevi declared himself publicly in the synagogue, with blowing of horns, as the expected Messiah (on the new year, September or October, 1665), and the multitude shouted to him, "Long live our King, our Messiah!"

The proverb that a prophet is least honoured in his own country was for once belied. The madness of the Jews of Smyrna knew no bounds. Every sign of honour and enthusiastic love was shown him. It was not joy, but delirium to feel that the long-expected Messiah had at last appeared, and in their own community. The delirium seized both great and small. Women, girls and children, fell into raptures, and proclaimed Sabbataï Zevi in the language of the Zohar as the true redeemer. The word of the prophet, that God at the end of the world will pour forth his spirit upon the young, appeared fulfilled. All prepared for a speedy exodus and a return to the Holy Land. The workmen neglected their business, and thought only of the approaching kingdom of the Messiah. The confusion in men's brains showed itself in the way in which the Sabbatians of Smyrna strove to merit a share in this time of grace. On the one hand, they subjected themselves to incredible chastisements—fasted several days in succession, watched whole nights through, in order that, by Kabbalistic forms of prayer (Tikkunim) at midnight, they might wipe away the sins which they had committed, and bathed in piercing cold water, or even while the snow covered the ground. Some buried themselves up to the neck in the soil, and remained

until their limbs were stiff with cold in these damp graves. On the other hand, they abandoned themselves to the most extravagant shouts of delight, and celebrated festival after festival in honour of the Messiah as often as Sabbataï Zevi showed himself—always surrounded by a large train of followers—whenever he walked through the streets singing Psalms, “The right hand of the Lord is exalted, the right hand of the Lord bringeth victory,” or as often as he preached in the synagogue and maintained his Messiahship by Kabbalistic interpretations of Scripture. He showed himself only in procession in public, waved a fan to cool himself, and whoever he touched with it was sure of the kingdom of heaven. The delirious joy of his followers knew no bounds. Every word of his was repeated a thousand times as the word of God, expounded, exaggerated and intensified. All that he did was held as miraculous and believed. The madness went so far that his adherents in Smyrna and also elsewhere, at Salonica, in that perpetual hot-bed of Kabbalists, married their children of twelve, ten, and even younger, to one another—seven hundred couples in all—in order that, according to Kabbalistic ideas, they might cause the remainder of souls not yet born to enter into life and thereby remove the last obstacle to the commencement of the time of grace.

The activity of Sabbataï Zevi in electrifying the minds of the simple believers, now by public pomp and pageantry, now by silent retirement, was supplemented by Sarah, his wife, who by her loose conduct worked on the passions of the male population. The bonds of chastity, which were drawn much tighter among the Eastern Jews than in Europe, were broken. The assembling of persons of both sexes in great multitudes, hitherto unheard of, was carried to an extravagant height. In Messianic transports of delight men and women



danced with one another as if mad, and in this mystical fervour many excesses are said to have been committed. The voice of censure and blame became gradually silenced, as all were drawn into the vortex, and the unbelievers were rendered harmless. The Rabbi Aaron de la Papa (died 1674), an aged and respectable man, who first spoke out concerning this Messianic madness and pronounced sentence against the originator of it, and together with the other Rabbis was publicly reviled in a sermon by Sabbataï, was removed from his office, and obliged to leave Smyrna.

Most unworthy was the behaviour of the Rabbi Chayim Benvenisti (1633-1673), a very considerable authority on the Talmud, and of astonishing learning, who, because he was a literary opponent of De la Papa, not only suffered the latter's removal from office, but also allowed himself to be appointed in his place by Sabbataï. Though at first harshly disposed towards the new Messiah he also became a believer and led the multitude by his authority. The latter were instigated by Sabbataï to bloodthirsty fanaticism. Because a highly noble, rich and respectable man in Smyrna, Chayim Penya, who had liberally supported Chayim Benvenisti, opposed the widespread delusion with obstinate incredulity, he was suddenly attacked in the synagogue, persecuted and nearly torn to pieces by the raging multitude. Sabbataï Zevi, the pretended incarnation of piety, commanded the synagogue to be broken open and the vile heretic to be seized. But when Penya's daughters, likewise attacked by madness fell into raptures and prophesied, the father had no choice but to put a good face upon the wretched business. He also assumed the air of a zealous adherent. After Penya's subjugation Sabbataï Zevi became sole ruler in the community, and could lead the Jewish population at will for good

or for evil. In this humour, which lasted for some months, the Jews of Smyrna feared their tyrants, the Turkish cadis, very little; if they offered to check the prevailing tendency, they were induced to remain inactive, being bribed by rich presents.

These events in the Jews' quarter at Smyrna made a great sensation in ever-widening circles. The neighbouring communities of Asia Minor, many members of which had betaken themselves to Smyrna, and after witnessing the scenes enacted in that town, had brought home with them exaggerated accounts of the Messiah's power of attraction and of working miracles, were swept into the same vortex. Sabbatai's private secretary, Samuel Primo, took care that reports of the fame and doings of the Messiah should reach the Jews abroad. Nathan Ghazati sent circulars from Palestine, while the itinerant prophets, Sabbatai Raphael and Matathias Bloch, filled the ears of their auditors with the most marvellous accounts of the new redeemer. But Christians also helped to spread the story. The ambassadors, the clerks of the English and Dutch mercantile houses, and the evangelical ministers, reported the extraordinary occurrences taking place in Smyrna, and though they scoffed at the folly of the Jews, could not avoid a half-credulous sympathy. "If they could only see with their own eyes the ecstasies and predictions of the prophets and prophetesses of Sabbatai Zevi, the true Redeemer!" On the Exchanges of Europe men spoke of him as a remarkable phenomenon, and listened eagerly for news from Smyrna or Constantinople. At first the Jews themselves were thunderstruck at the reports that suddenly burst upon them. Was the long cherished hope that one day the oppression and shame of Israel would be removed, and that they would again return in glory to their home, at length to be realised? No wonder, when nearly everywhere scenes similar to

those in Smyrna were repeating themselves, that men's minds were filled with credulity, which accepted the merest rumours as accredited facts, or that wild excitement, ascetic living and almsgiving to the needy, in order to make worthy preparation for the time of the Messiah, were followed here and there by prophetic ecstasies. Not only the senseless multitude, but also nearly all the Rabbis, and even men of culture and philosophical judgment, fell a prey to this credulity.

At that time there was not a single man of weight and importance who recognised that the primary source of all these phenomena lay in the Kabbala and Zohar. Jacob Sasportas, originally from Africa, had lived in Amsterdam, London and, at this time, in Hamburg. He was born about 1620, and died 1698. A man of courage and keen penetration, whose word had weight through his Talmudical learning—Sasportas from the very first combated this Messianic rage with passionate warmth. He was unwearied in sending letter after letter to the various communities, and in despatching messengers through Europe, Asia and Africa, to unmask the gross deceptions practised, and to warn men of the sad consequences. But even he was entangled in the snares of the Kabbala, and adopted its principles. On the ground of this spurious philosophy the thoroughgoing enthusiasts were more in the right than the half-hearted adherents. Spinoza, who might have scattered this thick mist with his luminous ideas, was not only estranged from Judaism and his race, but even hostile to them, and regarded the prevailing perplexities with indifferent or malicious eyes.

The accounts of Sabbataï Zevi and the Messianic excitement either came direct, or in a roundabout way by Alexandria, to Venice, Leghorn, and other Italian cities.

At Venice the first note was struck by the



bigoted Kabbalist Moses Zacut, Spinoza's very uncongenial fellow-student, who had formed the design of migrating from Amsterdam through Poland to Palestine, but stopped short in Venice. Far from opposing the delusion of the multitude, he encouraged it, as did the Rabbinate of Venice. The news from Smyrna had the most striking effect upon the two communities of the greater and the lesser Jerusalem of the North. The prophet of Gaza, who, despite his enthusiasm, was not devoid of sober calculation, had directed his propagandist circulars to the most considerable and richest communities—Amsterdam and Hamburg. These entered into close relationship with the new kingdom of the Messiah. The Jews of Amsterdam and Hamburg received confirmation of the extraordinary events at Smyrna from trustworthy Christians, many of whom were sincerely rejoiced thereat. Even Heinrich Oldenburg, a distinguished German savant in London, wrote to his friend Spinoza (December, 1665):—

“All the world here is talking of a rumour of the return of the Israelites, who have been dispersed for more than two thousand years, to their own country. Few believe it, but many wish it. . . . Should the news be confirmed, it may bring about a revolution in all things.”

The number of believers in Amsterdam increased daily amongst the Portuguese no less than among the Germans, and numbers of educated people set them the example; the Rabbis Isaac Aboab and Raphael Moses D'Aguiar, Spinoza's fellow-student Isaac Naar, and Abraham Pereira, one of the capitalists of Amsterdam and a writer on morals in Spanish, all became believers. Even the semi-Spinozist Dionysius Musaphia became a zealous adherent of the new Messiah. In Amsterdam the devotion to the new faith expressed itself in contradictory ways—by noisy music and dancing in the houses of prayer, and by gloomy, monkish self-mortification. The printing presses could not

supply enough copies of special prayer-books in Hebrew, Portuguese and Spanish, for the multitude of believers. In these books penances and formulas were given by which men hoped to become partakers in the kingdom of the Messiah. Many Sabbatian prayer-books (Tikkunim) printed Sabbatai's likeness together with that of King David, also the emblems of his dominion, and select sentences from the Bible. In confident expectation of a speedy return to the Holy Land, the presidents in one synagogue introduced the custom of pronouncing the priestly blessing every Sabbath.

At Hamburg, the Jews went to still greater lengths of folly, because they wished to make a demonstration against the bigoted Christians, who in many ways tormented them with vexatious restrictions, and when possible compelled them to listen to Christian sermons. Whoever entered the synagogue, and saw the Jewish worshippers hopping, jumping, and dancing about with the roll of the Law in their arms, serious respectable men without of Spanish stateliness and grandeur, must have taken them for madmen. In fact, a mental disease prevailed, which made men childish; even the most distinguished in the community succumbed to it.

Manoel Texeira, also called Isaac Senyor Texeira, was born about 1630, died about 1695. Some months before the death of his father, Diego Texeira, a Marrano nobleman who had emigrated from Portugal and settled at Hamburg, Manoel became resident minister, banker, and confidant of Christina, former Queen of Sweden. She valued him on account of his honesty, his noble bearing and his shrewdness. She exchanged letters with him on important affairs, conferred with him on the political interests of European States, and credited him with deep and statesmanlike views. During her residence at Hamburg she took up her abode in Manoel Texeira's house, to the vexation of the

local ecclesiastical authorities—who were hostile to the Jews—and remained quite unconcerned, although the Protestant preachers censured her severely from the pulpits. Men of the highest rank resorted to Texeira's house, and played with him for high stakes. This Jewish cavalier also belonged to Sabbataï's adherents, and joined in the absurd dances; as also did the skilful and famous physician, Bendito De Castro (Baruch Nehemiah), now advanced in years—who was for a long time the physician of the queen during her residence in Hamburg. De Castro was at that time president of the Hamburg community, and by his order the Messianic follies were practised in the synagogue. Jacob Sasportas, who because of the outbreak of the Plague in London at that time resided in Hamburg, did indeed contend in jest and in earnest against this Messianic delusion; but he could not make his voice heard, and only just escaped being roughly handled by the Sabbatians. The community recently established in London in the reign of Charles II., which had elected Jacob Sasportas as their Chief Rabbi, was no less possessed with this craze. They derived additional encouragement from contact with the Christian enthusiasts, who hoped to bring about the Millennium. Wonderful reports flew from mouth to mouth. It was said that in the north of Scotland a ship had appeared, with silken sails and ropes, worked by sailors who spoke in the Hebrew tongue. The flag bore an inscription, "The Twelve Tribes or Families of Israel." Believers living in London in English fashion offered wagers at the odds of ten to one that Sabbataï would be anointed king at Jerusalem within two years, and drew formal bills of exchange upon the issue. And wherever Jews dwelt the news of the Kabbalistic Messiah of Smyrna penetrated, and everywhere produced wild excitement. The little community of



Avignon, which was not treated in the mildest manner by the Papal officers, prepared to emigrate to the kingdom of Judah in the spring of the year 1666.

If Sabbataï Zevi had not hitherto firmly believed in himself and his dignity, this homage from nearly the whole Jewish race must have awakened a conviction of it in him. Every day advices, messengers, and deputations came pouring in, greeting him in the most flattering terms as king of the Jews, placing life and property at his disposal, and overwhelming him with gifts. Had he been a man of resolute determination and strength of will, he might indeed have attained to something with this genuine enthusiasm and willing devotion of his believers. Already Spinoza began to see a possibility for the Jews, with this favourable opportunity and owing to the mutability of human things, to re-establish their kingdom and again be the chosen of God. But Sabbataï Zevi was satisfied with the savour of incense, he cherished no great design, or rather, he lived in the delusion that men's expectations would fulfil themselves of their own accord by a miracle. Samuel Primo and some of his confidants appear however to have followed a fixed plan, namely, to break through the Rabbinical system, or even to abolish it. That was, properly speaking, implied in the reign of the Messiah. The fundamental conception of the Zohar, the Bible of the Kabbalists, is that in the time of grace, in the world of order (*Olam ha-Tikkun*), the laws of Judaism, the regulations concerning lawful and forbidden things, would completely lose their significance. Now this time had, as the Sabbatians thought, already begun; consequently, the minute ritualistic code of the *Shulchan Aruch* ought no longer to be held binding. Whether Sabbataï himself drew this conclusion, is doubtful. But some of his trusted adherents decidedly put this theory

forward. A certain bitterness towards the Talmud and the Talmudic method of teaching prevailed in these circles. The Sabbatian mystics felt themselves confined by the close meshes of the Rabbinical network, and sought to disentangle it loop by loop. Thus they set up a new deity, and substituted a man-god for the God of Israel. In their wanton extravagance the Kabbalists had so entirely changed the conception of the deity, that it had dwindled away into nothing. On the other hand, they had so highly exalted and magnified the Messiah, that he stood as near to God as possible. The Sabbatians, or one of them (Samuel Primo?), built further on this same foundation. From the Divine bosom (the Ancient of Days) a new divine personage had been developed, capable of restoring order in the world, as had been intended in the original plan of Divine Perfection. This new person was the Holy King (Malka Kadisha), the Messiah, the Primal Man (Adam Kadmon), who would destroy evil, sin and corruption, and cause the dried up streams of grace to flow again. He, the Holy King, the Messiah, is the true God, the Redeemer and Saviour of the world, the God of Israel; to him alone should prayers be addressed. The Holy King and Messiah combines two natures—one male, the other female; he can do more on account of his higher wisdom than the Creator of the world. Samuel Primo, who despatched the circulars and ordinances in the name of the Messianic King, often subscribed as signature, "I, the Lord, your God, Sabbataï Zevi." Whether the fanatic of Smyrna really encouraged this presumptuous blasphemy cannot be decided, any more than whether in his heart he completely abolished the Jewish law and rendered it null and void. For although some Sabbatians, who uttered these absurdities, pretended to have heard them from his own lips, other disciples asserted the contrary.

The truth probably is that Sabbataï Zevi, absorbed in idle ruminating, accepted everything which the more energetic among his followers taught or suggested. They began the dissolution of Judaism by the transformation of the fast of the tenth of Tebet (Asara be-Tebet) into a day of rejoicing. Samuel Primo directed a circular, in the name of his divinity, to the whole of Israel in semi-official form :

“The only and first-begotten Son of God, Sabbataï Zevi, Messiah and Redeemer of the people of Israel, to all the sons of Israel, Peace! Since ye have been deemed worthy to behold the great day and the fulfilment of God’s word by the prophets, your lament and sorrow must be changed into joy and your fasting into merriment, for ye shall weep no more. Rejoice with song and melody, and change the day, which was formerly spent in sadness and sorrow, into a day of jubilee, because I have appeared.”

So firmly rooted in men’s minds was this faith in Sabbataï Zevi, that the communities which the letter reached in time, discontinued this fast, although they believed that they could only enter into the kingdom of the Messiah by strict abstinence. The staunch orthodox party, however, were shocked at this innovation. They could not conceive the Messiah to be other than as a pious Rabbi, who, if possible, would invent fresh burdens. A thousand times had they read indeed in the Zohar and repeated to one another, that in the time of the Messiah the days of mourning would be changed into days of feasting, and the Law in general would be no longer binding; but when this was done seriously, horror seized upon them. Those Rabbis who before had regarded the movement half incredulously, or had not interfered with the penances and deeds of active benevolence to which many of the Sabbatians had felt prompted, thereby giving a silent assent to the movement, now raised their voice against the law-destroying Messiahship. There began to be formed accordingly in every large community a small party at least of un-



believers (Kofrim), chiefly men learned in the Talmud, who desired to guard the established religion against all attacks and disruption.

Rabbinical Judaism and the Kabbala, hitherto in close confederation, began to be at variance with one another; this doubtful ally showing herself at last in her true form as the enemy of staunch Rabbinism. But this sobering discovery, that in the Kabbala the Rabbis had nourished a serpent in their minds, was as yet recognised only by a few. They still remained true to her, imputing the growing hostility to the Shulchan Aruch to Sabbataï and his aiders and abettors. It was too late however, and their voices were drowned in shouts of joy. Solomon Algazi and some, belonging to the Rabbinate of Smyrna, who shared his opinions, tried to oppose the abolition of the fast, but were nearly stoned to death by the multitude of believers, and were obliged, like Aaron de la Papa, to leave the city in haste.

But the Messiah was at last forced to tear himself from his fool's paradise and the atmosphere of incense in Smyrna, in order to accomplish his work in the Turkish capital—either because his followers compelled him to put his light not under a bushel, but upon it, that the world at large might see it, or because the Cadi could no longer endure the mad behaviour of the Jews, and did not wish to bear the sole responsibility. It is said that the Cadi gave Sabbataï Zevi the space of three days to embark for Constantinople and to appear before the highest Turkish authorities. In his delusion, Zevi, perhaps, believed that a miracle would take place in order to fulfil the prophecies of Nathan Ghazati and other prophets, and that he would easily be able to take the crown from the head of the Sultan. He therefore prepared for his journey. Before he left Smyrna, he divided the world among his six-and-twenty faithful ones, and called them

kings and princes. His brothers, Elijah and Joseph Zevi, received the lion's share; the former was named king of kings in general, and the latter, king of the kings of Judah. To his other faithful followers he disclosed at the same time, in Kabbalistic language, which soul of the former kings of Judah or Israel dwelt in each of their bodies, that is, had passed into them by transmigration. Among the better known names were those of the companion of his youth, Isaac Silveira, and Abraham Yachini at Constantinople, who had imparted to him the art of mysticism. Raphael Joseph Chelebi could least of all be passed over; he had been the first firm supporter of the Messiah, and was called King Joash. A Marrano physician, who had escaped from Portugal and sworn allegiance to him, received the crown of Portugal. Even his former opponent, Chayim Penya, received a kingdom of his own. A beggar, Abraham Rubio, was likewise raised to a throne at Smyrna, under the name of Josiah, and was so firmly convinced of his approaching sovereignty that he refused large sums which were offered him for his imaginary kingdom.

Sabbataï Zevi appears to have started on his Messianic journey to Constantinople with a certain degree of purpose exactly at the beginning of the mystic year 1666. He was accompanied by some of his followers, his secretary, Samuel Primo, being in his train. He had announced the day of his arrival at Constantinople beforehand, but circumstances proved false to him. The ship in which he sailed had to contend with bad weather, and the voyage was prolonged for weeks. But since the sea did not devour him, the Sabbatians composed marvellous stories describing how the storm and the waves had obeyed the Messiah. At some place on the coast of the Dardanelles the passengers of the weather-beaten vessel were obliged to land, and there Sabbataï was arrested by Turkish officers, who had been sent

to take him prisoner. The Grand Vizir, Ahmed Coprili, had heard of the excitement of the Jews in Smyrna, and desired to suppress it. The officers had strict orders to bring the pretended redeemer in fetters to the capital, and therefore hastened to meet the ship by which he came. According to orders, they put him in fetters and brought him to a small town in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, because the eve of the Sabbath was near. Informed by a messenger of his arrival at Chekese Kutschuk, his followers hastened from the capital in order to see him, but found him in a pitiable plight and in chains. The money which they brought with them, however, procured him some alleviation, and on the following Sunday (February, 1666) he was brought by sea to Constantinople—but in how different a manner to what he and his believers had anticipated! Meanwhile, however, his coming had caused excitement. At the landing-place there was such a crowd of Jews and Turks who desired to see the Messiah, that the police were obliged to superintend the disembarkation. An under-pasha who had been commissioned to receive him, welcomed the man-god with a vigorous box on the ear. Sabbataï Zevi is said, however, to have wisely turned the other cheek to the blow. Since he could not play the triumphant Messiah, he at least wished to play that of the suffering one with a good grace. When brought before the deputy-vizir (Kaimakam), Mustapha Pasha, he did not stand the first test brilliantly. When asked what his intentions were, and why he had roused the Jews to such a pitch of excitement, Sabbataï is said to have answered that he was nothing more than a Jewish Chacham, who had come from Jerusalem to the capital to collect alms; he could not help it if the Jews testified so much devotion to him. Mustapha thereupon sent him to a prison in which insolvent Jewish debtors were confined.



Far from being disappointed at this treatment, his followers in Constantinople still persisted in their delusion. For some days they kept quietly at home, because the street boys mocked them by shouting, "Is he coming? is he coming?" (Gheldi mi, Gheldi mi.) But they soon began again to assert that he was the true Messiah, and that the sufferings which he had encountered were necessary, and a condition to his glorification. The prophets continued to proclaim the speedy redemption of Sabbataï and of all Israel. A Turkish dervish also filled the streets of Constantinople with prophecies of the manifested Messiah, whose enemies said that Sabbataï's followers had bribed him. Thousands crowded daily to Sabbataï's place of confinement merely to snatch a glimpse of him. English merchants who could not get their claims satisfied by their Jewish debtors, applied to the Messiah. A document issued by him, admonishing defaulters to do justice to their creditors, as otherwise they would have no share in his joy and glory, had the best effect. Samuel Primo took care that the most fabulous accounts should reach the Jews of Smyrna, and those who dwelt at a distance, of the reverence which was paid to the Messiah by the Turkish authorities. "They were all at heart convinced of his dignity." The expectations of the Jews were thereby raised to a still higher pitch, and the most exaggerated hopes were fostered to a greater degree. It was looked upon as a palpable miracle that the summary Turkish justice even allowed him, the rebellious Jew, to live. Did not this act of mercy prove that they feared him? The Turkish Government does in fact seem to have felt some awe at the Jewish Messiah. The Cretan War was impending, which demanded all the powers of the already half-exhausted Turkish Empire. The prudent Grand Vizir, Ahmed Coprili, did not like to sentence him to death, and thus make a

fresh martyr, and cause a desperate riot among the Jews. Even the Turks, influenced by Sabbataï's manner, and deceived by extraordinary miraculous manifestations, especially by the prophecies of women and children, joined the ranks of his worshippers. But it seemed to Coprili to be dangerous, during his absence at the war, to leave Sabbataï in Constantinople, where he might easily add fuel to the ever-increasing excitement in the capital. He therefore commanded, after Sabbataï had been for two months imprisoned in Constantinople—from the beginning of February to the 17th April—that he should be taken to the Castle of the Dardanelles at Abydos, where State-prisoners were wont to be kept in custody. It was a mild confinement; some of his friends were allowed to accompany him thither, and Samuel Primo was not required to leave him. The Sabbatians called this fortress by a mystical name, the Tower of Strength (Migdal Oz).

If Sabbataï Zevi doubted himself for a moment, his courage rose through the change of his abode, the respectful clemency shown him on the part of the Divan, and the steady and increasing devotion of the Jews. The Messiah was himself again. On his arrival at the Castle of the Dardanelles on the 19th April, the day of the preparation for the Passover, he slew a Paschal lamb for himself and his followers, and ate it with the fat, which is forbidden by the laws of the Talmud. He is said, while doing so, to have used a form of blessing which implied that the Mosaic, Talmudic, and Rabbinical law was abrogated — “Blessed be God, who hath restored again that which was forbidden.” At Abydos he held a regular court with the large sums of money which his brothers and his rich adherents sent him with lavish hand. His wife Sarah, who was allowed to remain with him, demeaned herself as the Messiah's queen,

and bewitched the multitude by her charms. In the Turkish capital a number of ships conveyed his followers to the Castle of the Dardanelles. Freights rose in consequence daily. From other countries, too, and various parts of the world, crowds of Jews streamed to the place of his captivity, in order to be deemed worthy of beholding him. The governor of the castle reaped advantage thereby, for he charged the visitors entrance-money and raised it to fifteen or thirty marks a-head. Even the inhabitants of the place had their profit, because they could earn high prices for board and lodging. A veritable shower of gold poured into Abydos. The impression which these facts, industriously circulated and exaggerated, made on the Jews in Europe, Asia and Africa, and the effect which they produced, are indescribable. With few exceptions all were convinced of Sabbatai's Messiahship and of a speedy redemption, in two years at the latest. They said to themselves that he had had the courage to go to the Turkish capital, although he had openly proclaimed the dethronement of the Sultan, and yet had not forfeited his life, but had been left in a sort of mock imprisonment. What more was needed to confirm the predictions of prophets of ancient and modern times? The Jews accordingly prepared themselves seriously for returning to their original home. In Hungary they were already beginning to carry away the roofs of their houses. In large commercial cities, where the Jews took the lead in wholesale business, such as Amsterdam, Leghorn and Hamburg, stagnation of trade ensued. In almost all synagogues the two first letters of his name, S and Z, were posted up with more or less adornment. Almost everywhere a prayer was inserted for him in the following form: "Bless our Lord and King, the holy and righteous Sabbatai Zevi, the Messiah of the God of Jacob." In Europe the eyes of all communities were directed



to Amsterdam, of which the representatives for the most part adhered to the movement. Every post-day which brought fresh letters was a holiday for them. The people of Amsterdam showed their joy openly, and were afraid neither of the Christian population nor of the magistrates. Isaac Naar, of Amsterdam, and the rich Abraham Pereira, prepared themselves for a journey to the Messiah, and the former ironically announced it to the unbelieving Jacob Sasportas. The Hamburg community always pursued the same course as that of Amsterdam, or even went beyond it. The Council introduced the custom of praying for Sabbataï Zevi not only on Saturday, but also on Monday and Thursday. The unbelievers were compelled to remain in the synagogue in order to join in the prayer with a loud Amen. And all this was done at the suggestion of the educated physician, Bendito De Castro. The believers used formal threats to their opponents if they ventured to utter a word of censure against Sabbataï. At Venice, on the Sabbath, a quarrel broke out between the Sabbatians and their opponents, and one of the latter nearly lost his life. When Sabbataï was asked how the kofrim (unbelievers) should be dealt with, he or Samuel Primo answered, they should be put to death without more ado, even on the Sabbath; the executors of such punishment were sure of happiness. A learned Talmudist at Buda, Jacob Ashkenazi of Wilna, whose son and grandson afterwards became zealous persecutors of the Sabbatians, went even further, and declared a member of the community worthy of death because he would not say the blessing for Sabbataï Zevi. In Moravia (at Nikolsburg) there were such violent dissensions and tumults in consequence of the craze about the Messiah, that the governor of the province was obliged to post up notices to calm men's minds. At Salee, in the north-west of Africa, the ruling

Emir Gailan (Gailand) ordered a persecution of the Jews because they too openly displayed the hope of their coming redemption.

But many Christians were also not free from the delusive faith in the new Messiah, and on them the tidings which came every week from the East concerning Sabbataï Zevi and his doings, made an overwhelming impression. At Hamburg, for example, pious Protestants betook themselves to the proselytising preacher, Esdras Edzard, and asked him what was now to be done.

“We have almost certain accounts, not only from Jews, but also from our Christian correspondents at Smyrna, Aleppo, Constantinople, and other places in Turkey, that the new Messiah of the Jews does many miracles, and the Jews of the whole world flock to him. What will then become of the Christian doctrine and the belief in our Messiah?”

The attention bestowed by educated classes of Christians upon the extraordinary events which were published as news of the day enhanced the credulity of the Jews. In short, every circumstance tended to increase the deception. Only Jacob Sasportas raised his warning voice against the imposture. He corresponded in all directions, here to point out the absurdity of current rumours, and there to collect exact information. It was not of much use. Forged letters and legal documents were the order of the day; conscientiousness and uprightness had utterly disappeared. Thus the mist of false belief continually grew thicker and thicker, and no one was any longer able to get at the truth.

In the meanwhile Sabbataï for three months, from April to July, had been leading the life of a prince in the castle of the Dardanelles, and caring only for self-worship. Either from natural inclination or at Samuel Primo's suggestion, he declared the fast of the 17th Tammuz to be abolished, because on this day he had arrived at

a consciousness of being the Messiah. Was this a mere freak, or was it done with an intention of accustoming his believers to the abolition of Rabbinical Judaism? At all events, he appointed the 23rd Tammuz (July 25th), a Monday, to be kept as a strict Sabbath. More than four thousand Jews, men and women, who happened on that day to be at Abydos, celebrated this new Sabbath with great scrupulousness. Sabbataï, or his secretary, sent circulars to the communities directing that they should formally celebrate the next fast, the ninth of Ab, his birthday, as a festival by a special service, with Psalms specially chosen, with eating of choice meats, and the sound of the harp and singing. He is also said to have contemplated the annulling of all the Jewish festivals, even the Day of Atonement, and of introducing others in their stead. But before this could be done, he was guilty in his pride of an act of folly which caused the whole fabric to collapse.

Among the many thousand visitors, who came from far and near, two Poles from Lemberg made a pilgrimage to him, in order to confirm their faith and to feast on his countenance. One was Isaiah, son of a highly-esteemed Rabbinical authority; the aged David Levi (Ture Zahab), and grandson of the no less celebrated Joel Serkes; the other, his half-brother, Leb Herz. From these two Poles Sabbataï heard that in the distant land from which they came, another prophet, Nehemiah Cohen, announced the approach of the Messiah's kingdom, but not in his (Sabbataï's) person. He therefore gave Isaiah Levi a laconic letter to take to his father, in which he promised to the Jews of Poland revenge for the massacre they had suffered through the Cossacks, and peremptorily ordered Nehemiah to come to him with all speed. He laid so much stress on Nehemiah's coming, that he made his followers eager for his arrival. The two Poles



F travelled back delighted to Lemberg, and spread the news everywhere of the splendour amid which they had seen the Messiah. Nehemiah was ordered to hasten quickly to Sabbataï, and was not deterred by the length of the journey. When he arrived at Abydos at the beginning of September, he was immediately admitted to an audience, which lasted several days. The Polish prophet and the Messiah of Smyrna did not laugh in one another's faces, like two augurs, but disputed together gravely and earnestly. The object of their mystical discussion remained unknown, as may be imagined. It was said to have been concerned with the forerunner of the Messiah—the Messiah of Ephraim—whether he had already appeared and perished, or not, as had been predicted. Nehemiah was not convinced by the long argument, and did not conceal the fact. On this account, the fanatical Sabbatians are said to have secretly made signs to one another to do away with this dangerous Pole. But he fortunately escaped from the castle, betook himself forthwith to Adrianople, to the Kaimakam Mustapha, became a Mahometan, and betrayed the fantastic and treasonable designs which Sabbataï Zevi cherished, and which only remained unknown to the Government, because the overseer of the castle of the Dardanelles had an interest in the concourse of the Jews.

The Kaimakam conveyed the intelligence to the Sultan, Mohammed VI., and the course to be pursued with regard to Sabbataï was maturely considered, the Mufti Vanni being also admitted to aid the deliberations. To make short work with the rebellious schemer appeared impracticable to the council, particularly as Mahometans also followed him. If he should fall as a martyr, a new sect might arise, which would furnish material for fresh disturbances. Vanni, a proselytizing priest, proposed that an attempt be made to bring Sabbataï over to Islam. This advice was followed, and the

Sultan's physician (Hakim Bashi), a Jewish renegade, by name Guidon, was employed as the medium. A messenger suddenly appeared at Abydos, drove away the Jews, who were besieging the Messiah with homage, conveyed him to Adrianople, and brought him first to a meeting with the Hakim Bashi, who, as a former co-religionist, would be able to convert him the more easily. The physician represented to him the dreadful punishment that would inevitably befall him—he would be bound and scourged through the streets with burning torches, if he did not appease the wrath of the Sultan by adopting Islamism. It is not known whether this call to apostatise from Judaism cost the conceited Messiah great mental conflict. He certainly had not much manly courage, and Judaism, in its existing form, was for him perhaps already dead. So he adopted Guidon's advice. The following day (13th Elul, 14th Sept., 1666) he was brought before the Sultan. He immediately cast off his Jewish head-dress, in sign of contempt; a page offered him a white Turkish turban, and a green mantle instead of the black one which he wore, and so his conversion to the Mahometan religion was accomplished. While his dress was being changed, it is said that several pounds of biscuit were found in his loose trousers. The Sultan was highly pleased at this termination of the movement, gave him the name of Mehmed Effendi, and appointed him his door-keeper—Capigi Bashi Otorak—with a considerable monthly salary; he was to remain near the Sultan. The Messiah's wife, Sarah, the Polish Rabbi's fair daughter of loose behaviour, likewise became a Mahometan, under the name of Fauna Kadin, and received rich presents from the Sultana. Some of Sabbataï's followers also went over to Islam. The Mufti Vanni instructed them in the Mahometan

religion. Sabbataï is said to have married a Mahometan slave in addition to his wife, Sarah, at the command of the Mufti. Nehemiah Cohen, who had brought about Sabbataï's apostasy, did not however remain in Turkey; but returned to Poland, laid down the turban again, and lived quietly without breathing a word of what had happened. He disappeared just as suddenly as he had come forward. The ex-Messiah impudently wrote, some days after his conversion, to his brothers at Smyrna: "God has made me an Ishmaelite; He commanded, and it was done. The ninth day of my regeneration." Nearly at the same time all the Rabbis and presidents of schools at Amsterdam assembled, and sent a letter of homage to Sabbataï Zevi, in order to testify their belief and submission to him. The semi-Spinozist (Benjamin) Dionysius Musaphia, vexed that he was not invited to be present at the sending of the letter, wrote a separate letter to Sabbataï Zevi, signed by himself and two members of the school (24th Elul). A week later, twenty-four distinguished men of Amsterdam sent another letter of homage to the apostate Messiah. At their head was Abraham Gideon Abudiente. Did those letters reach the Mahometan, Mehmed Effendi? At Hamburg, where no one dreamt of his conversion, the blessing was five times pronounced over the renegade Sabbataï, on the Day of Atonement (9th October, 1666).

But when the rumour of his apostasy had gone the round of the communities, and could no longer be denied, there followed upon the confidence hitherto felt a bewildering sense of disenchantment and shame. The highest representative of Judaism had abandoned and betrayed it! Chayim Benvenisti, the Rabbi of Smyrna, who had invested the false Messiah with authority from motives which were far from honourable, almost died of shame. Mahometans and Christians pointed with scorn



at the blind and credulous Jews. The street boys in Turkey openly jeered at the Jewish passers-by, but this ridicule was not all. So widespread a commotion could not die out and leave no trace behind. The Sultan thought of destroying all the Jews in his empire, because they had formed rebellious plans, and of ordering all children under seven to be brought up in Islamism. The *ci-devant* Mahometan, Mehmed Effendi, in order to revenge himself, is said to have betrayed his own plans, and the consent of the Jews thereto. Two councillors and the Sultana-mother are reported to have dissuaded the Sultan from his design by the observation that the Jews ought to be regarded as having been misled. Fifty chief Rabbis, however, because they had neglected their duty in teaching the people, were actually to be executed—twelve from Constantinople, twelve from Smyrna, and the remaining twenty-six from the other communities in Turkey. It was regarded as a special miracle that this resolution remained a dead letter, and that the Jews did not even have to pay a fine. The division in the communities might have had even worse consequences than this, if the unbelievers had heaped scorn and mockery upon the late devotees. But the college of Rabbis in the East interposed, and sought to appease and reconcile them, and also threatened to excommunicate any one who should, by word or deed, offend a former Sabbatian.

Nevertheless, although men's minds were calmed for the moment, peace was not restored for long. After the first surprise at Sabbatai's conversion was over, his zealous followers, especially at Smyrna, began to recover and could not persuade themselves that they had really been running after a shadow. There must indeed be, or have been, some amount of truth at least in Sabbatai's Messianic claims, since all signs so entirely agreed. The Kabbalists easily got over objections. Sabbatai had not turned

Mahometan, but a phantom had played that part; he himself had retired to heaven or to the Ten Tribes, and would soon appear again to accomplish the work of redemption. As at the time of the origin of Christianity mystical believers (Docetæ) interpreted the crucifixion of Jesus as a myth, so now thoroughgoing mystics explained to themselves Sabbataï's apostasy from Judaism. Others, who designed, through him, to bring about the fall of Rabbinical Judaism, such as Samuel Primo, Jacob Faliachi, Jacob Israel Duchan, men who did not wish to abandon their plan without further effort, still clung to him firmly. The most interested in remaining steadfast to him were the prophets, who had been manifestly proved false through his conversion. They did not like simply to renounce their functions and withdraw into obscurity, or be laughed at. The prophets residing at Smyrna, Constantinople, Rhodes and Chios were certainly silenced; but the itinerant prophets, Nathan Ghazati and Sabbataï Raphael, did not choose to abdicate. The former had remained in Palestine during Sabbataï's triumph in order to receive homage for him. After the deception was unmasked he regarded himself as no longer safe; he made preparations for betaking himself to Smyrna, and continued sending out his mystical and bombastical letters. From Damascus he warned the Jews of Aleppo in a letter not to allow themselves to be discouraged in their belief in the Messiah by strange circumstances; it was a deep mystery shortly to be revealed; but wherein the mystery consisted could not yet be disclosed. By these circulars the credulous were confirmed afresh in their delusion. In Smyrna many synagogues continued to insert the blessing for Sabbataï in their prayers. Hence, the Rabbis were obliged to interfere vigorously, especially the Rabbinate of the Turkish capital. They laid under a ban all who should even pronounce the name of

Sabbataï or converse with his followers, and threatened to hand them over to the secular arm. Nathan Ghazati, in particular, was excommunicated, and everyone warned against harbouring him or approaching him (12th Kislev, 9th December, 1666). These sentences of excommunication were so far effectual that Nathan could not stay anywhere for any length of time, and even in Smyrna he could only remain in secret at the house of a believer. But the Rabbis were not able entirely to exorcise the imposture. One of the most zealous Sabbatians, probably Samuel Primo, who was ready in invention, threw out a suggestion which drew better than that of the mock conversion. All was ordained to be as it had come to pass. Precisely by his going over to Islam had Sabbataï proved himself to be the Messiah. It was a Kabbalistic mystery which some writings had already announced beforehand. As the first redeemer Moses was obliged to reside for some time at Pharaoh's court, not as an Israelite, but to all appearance as an Egyptian, even so must the last redeemer live some time at a heathen court, apparently in heathen garb, "outwardly sinful, but inwardly pure." It was Sabbataï's task to free the lost emanations of the soul, which pervade even Mahometans, and by identifying them with himself, as it were, bring them back again to the fountain-head. He was thereby most effectually furthering the kingdom of the Messiah, whilst redeeming souls in all directions. This suggestion was a lucky hit; it kindled anew and fanned the flame of the imposture. It became a watchword for all the Sabbatians, enabling them to profess themselves as believers, with decency and a show of reason, and to hold together.

Nathan Ghazati also caught up this idea, and was encouraged to resume his part as a prophet. He had fared badly so far; he was obliged secretly to leave Smyrna, where he had stayed several



months (end of April, 1667) in hiding. His followers, consisting of more than thirty men, were dispersed. But by this new imposture he recovered his courage and approached Adrianople, where Mehmed Effendi and several of his adherents resided, and, as pretended Mahometans, lived with him and revelled in fancy. The representatives of Judaism at Constantinople and Adrianople rightly feared fresh disturbances from the presence of the false prophet, and desired to get rid of him. Nathan Ghazati, however, relied on his prophecies, which might possibly, he said, be fulfilled at the end of the year. He expected that the Holy Spirit would descend upon the renegade Mehmed at the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and in consequence he also would be able to show signs and wonders. Until then, he defiantly replied to the deputies, he could enter into no engagement. When the Feast of Weeks was over, the people of Adrianople again urged him to cease from his juggleries, but, after much labour, could only obtain from him the written promise that he would keep at a distance of twelve days' journey from the city, that he would not correspond with Sabbataï, that he would not assemble people round him, and that if by the end of the year the Redeemer should not appear, his prophecies should be regarded as false. But, in spite of his written promises, this lying prophet continued his agitation, and admonished the Sabbatians in Adrianople to make known their continued adhesion by the suspension of the fast on the 17th Tammuz. For in this city, there was a Sabbatian conventicle under the leadership of a former disciple, who stood in close connection with Mehmed Effendi. The Rabbinate of Adrianople knew of no plan by which they could check the mischievous course of this daring sect, and were obliged to have recourse to falsehood. They announced that the renegade had suddenly appeared before the Jewish communal

council, had repented of his imposture, and had laid all the blame on Nathan and Abraham Jachini, who had made him their dupe. In this way the Rabbinate succeeded in deceiving the Sabbatians. But the effect did not last long. Nathan on the one hand and the circle round Mehmed Effendi on the other, encouraged and awakened new hope, the number of believers again increased, and they made a special point of not fasting on the 9th Ab, the birthday of their Messiah. The Rabbimates of Constantinople and Smyrna sought to repress this imposture by the old means—excommunication and threats of punishment (end of July)—but with little success; the Sabbatians had a sort of hankering after martyrdom in order to seal their faith. The false prophet renewed his propagandism. He always had some followers about him, and even two Mahometans. At Salonica, where was a swarm of Kabbalists, he indeed fared badly, but so much more easily did he find a hearing in the communities of the islands of Chios and Corfu. His hopes were however principally directed to Italy.

Here also confusion still continued. The first news of Sabbatai's defection had not been confirmed in consequence of the war in Crete, the ships of the Christians having been captured by the Turks. Thus the Sabbatians had breathing-time to maintain their faith and to denounce the news as a false report, especially as encouraging letters arrived from Raphael Joseph Chelebi of Cairo and from other places. The most absurd stories of Sabbatai's power and dignity at the Porte were published in Italy and found credence. Moses Pinheiro, Sabbatai's old companion, Raphael Sofino at Leghorn, and the Amsterdam fanatics, Isaac Naar and Abraham Perreira, who had gone to Italy to search for the Messiah, had a special interest in clinging to straws, that they might not be ridiculed as dupes. But the ignorant mountebank

and strolling prophet, Sabbataï Raphael, from the Morea, then residing in Italy, was bent upon deception and fraud, and appears to have made a good harvest there. But when at last there could be no doubt of the fact of Sabbataï's change of religion, Raphael turned his steps to Germany, where, on account of the defective postal arrangements and the slight intercourse of Jews with the outer world, they had only a vague idea of the course of events, and took the most foolish stories for truth. Sabbataï Raphael was there regarded as a prophet; but, as he expected greater gain from the rich Amsterdam community, he betook himself thither (September, 1667). Here also the imposture continued. From a feeling of shame that they, the shrewd and educated Portuguese, should have been so signally deceived, they at first placed no faith in the news of Sabbataï's treachery. Even the Rabbis, Isaac Aboab, Moses Raphael d'Aguilar and the philosophical sceptic Musaphia, remained staunch. Rightly did Jacob Sasportas laugh them to scorn, especially Musaphia, on account of his present unshaken faith as contrasted with his former incredulity.

Meanwhile Nathan Ghazati, the prophet of Gaza, was pursuing his mischievous course in Italy. When, on coming from Greece, he landed at Venice (end of March, 1668), the Rabbinate and Presidency, who had had warning of him, would not allow him admission into the Ghetto. But a Sabbatian interceded for him with some Christians of rank, and under such protection he could not be expelled. But in order to cure those who had shared in the delusion, the Rabbinate wrung from him a written confession, that his prophecies of Sabbataï Zevi's Messiahship rested on a freak of his imagination, that he recognised them as such, and held them to be idle. This confession was printed with an introduction by the Rabbinate of Venice, in order at last to open the eyes of the Sabbatians



in Italy. But it was not of much avail. The delusion, resting as it did on the Kabbala, was too deeply rooted. From Venice Ghazati was sent on to Leghorn, and the community received a hint to render him innocuous there, where the Jews enjoyed more freedom; but Nathan Ghazati secretly escaped to Rome, cut off his beard, disguised himself, and is said to have thrown notes written in Chaldee into the Tiber, in order to bring about the destruction of Rome. The Jews however recognised him, and, since they feared danger for themselves on Papal soil from his fraudulent absurdities, they procured his banishment. Then he went to Leghorn, and found followers there also. Nathan promised himself, however, more honour and profit in Turkey, or more opportunity to satisfy his restless mind, and so he returned to Adrianople. He did not pay great regard to word and oath. Nathan Ghazati compiled much Kabbalistic nonsense, but he acquired no fame. He is said to have died at Sophia, and to have been laid in a vault dug by himself (1680). Other men, however, appeared at the head of the Sabbatians, who far surpassed him and pursued a definite end.

Sabbataï, or Mehmed Effendi, at this time began his revolutionary chimeras afresh. At first, after his apostasy he was obliged, under the direction of the Mufti Vanni, to live as a Mahometan, and guard himself carefully against any appearance of inclination to Judaism and the Jews. He therefore figured as a pious Mahometan. But gradually he ventured to assume greater freedom, and to give utterance to his Kabbalistic views about God and the universe. Vanni, to whom indeed much was new, heard his expositions with curiosity, and the Sultan also is said to have listened to his words attentively. Probably Sabbataï won over both to believe in his Kabbalistic dreams. Weary of this quiet life, and anxious to play an active part again, he once

more entered into close relations with the Jews, and gave out that he had been filled anew with the Holy Spirit at Passover (end of March, 1668), and had received revelations. Sabbataï, or one of his aiders and abettors, published a mystical writing ("Five Evidences of the Faith," *Sahaduta di Mehenuta*) addressed to the Jews and couched in extravagant language, in which the following fantastic views were set forth. That Sabbataï had been and still remained the true Redeemer, that it would be easy for him to prove himself to be such, if he had not compassion on Israel, who thereby would have to experience the same dreadful sufferings as the Messiah, and that he only persisted in Mahometanism in order to bring thousands and tens of thousands of non-Jews over to Israel. To the Sultan and Mufti, on the other hand, he gave it to be understood that his approximation to the Jews was intended to bring them over to Islam. He received permission to associate again with Jews, and to preach before them at Adrianople, even in the synagogues. Thus he played the part of a Jew at one time, of a Mussulman at another. If Turkish spies were present, his Jewish hearers knew how to deceive them. They threw away their Jewish head-dress, and put on the turban. Many Jews were, under these circumstances, seriously converted to Islam, and a Jewish-Turkish sect thus began to form round Sabbataï Zevi. The Jews who had hitherto felt such horror of apostatising from their religion, that only the outcasts amongst them went over to Christianity or Islam, were now becoming less severe; they only said that so and so had adopted the turban. Through such juggleries the staunch Sabbatians at Adrianople, Smyrna, Salonica, and other cities, even in Palestine, allowed themselves to be confirmed in their obstinate faith in the Messiah, who had already

appeared. Even pious men, learned in the Talmud, were continually joining his party.

While this complication was getting more involved, and the Kabbalistic-Messianic disorder was being pursued to its utmost limits, a Sabbatian champion unexpectedly appeared in a man of European culture, who was not wanting in gifts, Abraham Michael Cardoso. He was an original character, a living personification of the transformation of the Portuguese Jews after their expulsion. Born of Marrano parents at a small town of Portugal, Celarico, in the province of Beira, Miguel Cardoso, like his elder brother Fernando, studied medicine; but while the latter devoted himself earnestly to science, Miguel dawdled away his days in indolence amidst the luxury of Madrid, sang love-songs on the guitar under the balconies of fair ladies, and paid very little heed to the Kabbala or Judaism. What influenced him to leave Spain is not known. Perhaps his more serious and thoughtful brother took him away after he had made himself a name in Spain as a medical and scientific author, and out of love of Judaism migrated to Venice, where he plunged deeply into Jewish literature. Both brothers assumed Jewish names after their return to the religion of their forefathers. The elder, Isaac Cardoso, gave up his name Fernando; the younger took the name of Abraham in addition to that of Miguel (Michael). Both composed verses in Spanish. While the elder brother led a regular life, guided by moral principles and a rational faith, the younger fell under the sway of an extravagant fancy and an eccentric manner of living. Isaac Cardoso (born 1615, died after 1680) conferred renown on Judaism, while Abraham Michael Cardoso (born about 1630, died 1706) was a disgrace to it.

The latter, who had returned to Judaism at Venice, lived as a physician at Leghorn, and there asso-



ciated with the Bey of Tripoli. But his warm-blooded and dissolute nature was a hindrance to his advancement. Contrary to the custom even of African Jews he married two wives, and instead of employing himself busily with his difficult science, he hankered after what was fantastical. Cardoso appears to have been initiated in the Kabbala and the Sabbatian delusion, by Moses Pinheiro, who was staying at Leghorn.

About this time he continually had dreams and visions, which increased in frequency after the public appearance of Sabbataï at Smyrna and Constantinople. He communicated his delusion to his wives and domestics, who likewise pretended to have seen all sorts of apparitions. The apostasy of the false Messiah from Judaism did not recall Cardoso from his delusion; he still remained a zealous partizan, and even justified the treachery by saying that it was necessary for the Messiah to be counted among sinners, in order that he might atone for the sin of idolatry in Israel and blot it out. He sent circulars in all directions, in order to support the Messianic claim of Sabbataï, and to figure as a prophet. In vain did his more sober brother, Isaac Cardoso, warn and ridicule him, asking him, ironically, whether he had received the gift of prophecy from his former gallantries and from playing the guitar for the fair maidens of Madrid. Abraham Cardoso's frivolity was in no way lessened, he even assumed a hectoring tone towards his grave elder brother (who despised the Kabbala as much as alchemy and astrology); and sent him numberless proofs, from the Zohar and other Kabbalistic writings, that Sabbataï was the true Messiah, and that he must necessarily be estranged from Judaism. By this zeal he gained many adherents for the Sabbatian delusion in Africa; but he also made himself enemies, and incurred dangers. He continued to prophesy the speedy commencement of the

Messiah's reign, and although often proved false by the reality, he put off the event from one year to the next, performed Kabbalistic tricks, set up a new God for Israel, and actually figured as the Messiah of the house of Ephraim, until he was rigorously prosecuted by an opponent of these vagaries. Cardoso was in consequence driven back to his former uncomfortable position, forced to begin a life of adventure, and to win bread for himself and his belongings, so to speak, by his delusions, going through all sorts of jugglery, at Smyrna, at Constantinople, in the islands of Greece, and at Cairo, and nourishing the Sabbatian delusions with his abundant knowledge, eloquent tongue and ready pen. Thanks to his education in Christian schools, he was far superior to other Sabbatian apostles, and knew how to give an air of gravity and wisdom to their nonsense, thus blinding those already biassed, and stultifying even those who had been averse to the Sabbatian movement.

Sabbataï, encouraged by the continued support of the Jews in spite of his change of religion, persisted in keeping up his character as Messiah, and began to associate more and more with Jews. In fact his weak brain had been turned by the overwhelming rush of events, and he lost all self-control. At one time he reviled Judaism and the God of Israel with foul words of abuse, and is said even to have informed against the Jews before the Turkish magistrates as blasphemers of Islam. At another time he performed divine worship with his Jewish followers according to Jewish ritual, sang psalms, ordered selections from the Torah to be read aloud on the Sabbath, and frequently chose seven virgins for that purpose. In consequence of his constant intercourse with Jews, whom however he was not able to bring over wholesale to Mahometanism, as he may have boastfully asserted, Mehmed Effendi is said at last to have fallen into disfavour, to have

forfeited his allowance and to have been banished from Adrianople to Constantinople. He finally married another wife, the daughter of a man learned in the Talmud, Joseph Philosoph of Salonica. The Turkish patrol having on one occasion surprised him in a village (Kuru Gisme), near Constantinople, while singing psalms in a tent with some Jews, and the Bostanji Bashi (officer) having reported it, the Grand Vizir commanded the Kaimakam to banish him to Dulcigno, a small town in Albania, where no Jews dwelt. There he died, abandoned and forsaken, it was afterwards said, on the Day of Atonement, 1676.

Spinoza, who had likewise broken away from Judaism and had seen all these strange events happening in the course of his life, may well have looked with great contempt on this mad Messianic craze. If the task had devolved upon him to dig the grave of Judaism and bury it, he would have been obliged to welcome Sabbataï Zevi, his private secretary, Samuel Primo, and his prophets as allies and abettors. The irrationality of the Kabbala brought Judaism much more effectually into discredit than reason and philosophy. But it is a remarkable fact that neither the one nor the other could wean the numerous cultured Jews of Amsterdam from the religion of their forefathers, so strongly was it rooted in their hearts. Just at this time when two hostile currents were running counter to Judaism within its own limits, in the East and the West, the Portuguese community, which had increased to the number of four thousand families, undertook (1671) the building of a splendid synagogue, and after some years finished the huge work, which had been interrupted by war troubles. The dedication of the synagogue (10th Ab, 2nd August, 1675), was celebrated with great solemnity and pomp. Neither the first Temple of Solomon, nor the second of Zerubbabel, nor the



third of Herod, were so much lauded with song and eloquent speech as the new Temple at Amsterdam, called Talmud Torah. Copper-plate engravings of it, furnished with inscriptions in verse, were published. Christians likewise took part in the dedication. They advanced money to the Jews for building in the times of need, and a poet, Romein de Hooghe, composed verses in honour of the synagogue and the Jewish people in Latin, Dutch and French.

Spinoza lived to see this rejoicing of the community, from which he had become a pervert, for he happened to be at Amsterdam just at the time. He was engaged in seeing through the press a treatise (the Ethics), which reversed the views hitherto prevailing, and he also superintended the second and enlarged edition of his other work which was chiefly directed against Judaism. He may have laughed at the joy of the Amsterdam Jews as idle ; but the building of this synagogue in a city, which a hundred years before had tolerated no Jews and had supported a Spanish Inquisition, was a loud testimony of the times, and contradicted many of his assertions. He died not long afterwards, or rather, passed gently away as with a divine kiss (21st February, 1677), about five months after Sabbataï Zevi. Against his will, he contributed to the glory of the race, which he had so unjustly reviled. His powerful intellect, logical acumen and strength of character are becoming ever more recognized as properties which he owed to the race from which he was descended. On the side of the educated Jews, Isaac Orobio de Castro alone attempted a serious refutation of Spinoza's philosophical views. Though his intention was good, he was too weak to break through the close meshes of Spinoza's system ; and it was left to history to refute it through facts.

## CHAPTER V.

### LIGHT AND SHADE.

Jews under Mahometan Rulers—Expulsion from Vienna—Jews admitted by the Elector Frederick William into the Mark of Brandenburg—Charge of Child-murder in Metz—Milder treatment of the Jews throughout Europe—Christian Champions of the Jews: Jürieu, Oliger Pauli and Moses Germanus—Prediction of Christians for the Study of Jewish Literature—Richard Simon—Interest taken by Charles XI. in the Karaites—Peringer and Jacob Trigland—German attacks on Judaism by Wülfer, Wagenseil and Eisenmenger—Circumstances of the publication of *Judaism Unmasked*—The *Alenu* Prayer—Surenhuysius, Basnage, Unger, Wolf and Toland.

1669—1700 C.E.

THE princes and nations of Europe and Asia showed great consideration in not disturbing the Jews during the time of the Messianic farce, and in quietly allowing them to make themselves ridiculous. A pause had taken place in the constantly recurring persecution of the Jews, which did not, however, last very long. The regular succession of accusations, vexations and banishments soon recommenced. In this the contrast between the followers of Mahomet and those of Jesus is very striking. In Turkey the Jews were free from persecution, in spite of their great excitement and absurd dreams of a national Messiah. In Africa, indeed, Sid Gailand and later Muley Arshid, Sultan of Talifet, Fez and Morocco, oppressed the Jews, partly on account of their activity and partly from rapacity. But this ceased with the next Sovereign, Muley Ismail. The latter was a patron of the Jews, and entrusted several of them with important posts. He had two Jewish advisers, Daniel Toledano of Miquenes, a friend of Jacob Sasportas, a man

learned in the Talmud and experienced in State affairs, and Joseph Maimaran, likewise from Miquenes.

Within Christendom, on the contrary, the Jews were only esteemed and treated as men in Holland; in other States they were regarded as outcasts, who had no rights and no claim to compassion. Spain again led the way in decreeing banishments. That unfortunate country, which was becoming more and more depopulated through despotism, superstition and the Inquisition, was then ruled by a foolish and fanatical woman, the dowager-regent Maria Anna of Austria, who had raised her father-confessor, the German Jesuit Neidhard, to the rank of Inquisitor-General and Minister Plenipotentiary. Naturally, no toleration of other religions could be suffered at this bigoted court. There were still Jews in some parts of the monarchy, in the corner of north-western Africa, in Oran, Maxarquivir, and other cities. Many among them had rendered considerable services to the Spanish crown, both in times of peace and war, against the native Arabs or Moors, who endured with inward rage the dominion of the cross. The families of Cansino and Sasportas, the former of whom were royal interpreters, or dragomans, for the province of Oran, had distinguished themselves especially by their fidelity and devotion to Spain; and their conduct had been recognized by the husband of Maria Anna, Philip IV., in a special letter. Nevertheless, the Queen Dowager suddenly ordered the banishment of the Jews from the district, because she could not tolerate that people of this race should live any longer in her realm. At the urgent request of the Jewish grandees the governor was so indulgent as to allow the Jews an interval of eight days during the Passover; and to prove to them that they were banished, not because of their misconduct or treason, but simply on account of the intolerance of the Regent (end of April, 1669).



They were obliged to sell their possessions in haste and at a ridiculous price. Those who were banished settled in the district of Savoy, at Villafranca, near Nice.

Like mother, like daughter, and so about this time the banishment of the Jews from Vienna and the arch-duchy of Austria was decreed at the instigation of the daughter of the Spanish Regent, the Empress Margaret, an ally of the Jesuits. The emperor, indeed, would not at first allow himself to be prejudiced against the Jews, from whom he derived a certain revenue. The community of Vienna alone, which had grown to nearly two thousand souls, paid yearly to the treasury 10,000 and the country community 4,000 florins. Including the income from the Jews in other places, the emperor received from them 50,000 florins annually. But an empress need not trouble herself about finance; she can follow her own inclinations; and in her heart, which was filled with Jesuitism, she hated the Jews profoundly, and her father-confessor only strengthened her in this feeling. Having on one occasion met with an accident at a ball, she wished after her recovery to testify her gratitude to heaven which had so wonderfully preserved her, and could find no means more acceptable to God than the punishment of the Jews. More urgently than before she entreated her imperial consort to banish from the capital and the country the Jews, described by her father-confessor as outcasts of hell, and she received his consent. By trumpet-sound the emperor's command was made known in Vienna (14th February, 1670) that the Jews were to quit the city within a few months on pain of death. They left no efforts untried to avert the stroke. Often before had such a resolution been recalled by Austrian emperors. The Jews appealed to the privileges, accorded in writing, to the services which they had

rendered the imperial house, they offered large sums of money (there were very rich Court Jews at Vienna), they used the influence of persons who stood near the Court circle, and, after a solemn service for the recovery of the emperor from sickness, they offered him as he left the church a large gold cup, and to the empress a handsome silver basin and jug. The presents were accepted, but the command was not recalled.

At Vienna and at the Court there was no prospect of a change of purpose; the Jesuits had the upper hand there through the empress and her confessor. The community of Vienna in despair thought to avert the evil from their heads, by another and a more roundabout course. All the Jews of Germany had felt sincere sympathy for their brethren, and had implored heaven in prayer and fasting to save them. The Jews of Vienna could count confidently upon their zeal. They had recourse, therefore, in a pitiful letter to the most influential and perhaps the richest Jew of that time, Isaac (Manuel) Texeira, the esteemed friend of Queen Christina, begging him to exert his influence in their favour with the temporal and spiritual princes in order to make the Empress Margaret change her mind. Texeira had previously taken active steps in that direction, and promised to continue them. He had already written to some Spanish grandees with whom he stood in close connection to use their influence with the empress's confessor. The Queen of Sweden, who, after her romantic conversion to Catholicism, enjoyed great esteem in the Catholic world, led Texeira to hope that, by letters addressed to the Papal nuncio, to the empress and also to her mother, the Spanish Regent, she could prevent the banishment of the Austrian Jews. The Jews of Rome also did their part to save their threatened brethren. But all these united efforts led to nothing. Unhappily there had just been a

new Papal election at Rome after the death of Clement IX., so that the head of the Church, who yet tolerated Jews in his States, could not be prevailed upon to assume a decided attitude. The Emperor Leopold remained firm, and made arrangements about the destruction of the houses of the Jews before they had left them, only he was humane enough to order, under pain of severe punishment, that no harm should be done to the Jews on their departure.

Thus, then, the Jews had to submit to the iron will of necessity, and grasp their pilgrims' staffs. When, already 1,400 souls had fallen into distress, or at least into an anxious plight, and several of them had succumbed, the remainder, more than three hundred, again petitioned the emperor, putting forward the services of the Jews to the imperial house, showing all the accusations brought against them to be groundless, or in any case not proven. They did not shrink from declaring that to be a Jew might yet be no crime, and protested that they should be treated fairly as Roman citizens, who ought not to be summarily expelled. They begged at least for a respite until the next meeting of the Reichstag. Even this request, in which they referred to the difficulty of finding a place of refuge, if the emperor the ruler of half of Europe should reject them, remained without effect. All had to depart; only one family, that of the Court-factor, Marcus Schlesinger Jaffa, was allowed to remain in Vienna, on account of services rendered. The Jesuits were full of joy, and published an account of their victory in a small manual. The magistrates bought the Jews' quarter for the emperor for 100,000 florins, and called it Leopoldstadt in his honour. The site of the synagogue was used for a church, of which the emperor laid the first stone (18th August, 1670) in honour



of his patron saint. A golden tablet was to perpetuate the shameful actions of the Jews :

“After the Jews had been banished from here, the emperor caused their synagogue, which had been as a charnel-house, to be used as a house of God.”

The tablet, however, only proves the mental weakness of the emperor and his people. The Talmudical school (Beth-ha-Midrash) was likewise converted into a church, and named in honour of the empress and her patron saint.

But this dark side of the picture had also its bright side. A struggling State, which hitherto had not tolerated the Jews, now became a new, though not very hospitable home for the exiles, and gave the Jewish race a fresh lease of life. The exiles from Austria dispersed in various directions. Many of them sought protection in Moravia, Bohemia, and Poland. Others went to Venice and as far as the Turkish frontiers, others again turned to Fürth, in Bavaria. Fifty families were received by the Elector, Frederick William, in the Mark of Brandenburg. This great prince, who laid the solid foundation for the future greatness of the Prussian monarchy, was not indeed more tolerant than other princes of Louis XIV.'s century; but he was at any rate more clear-sighted than the Emperor Leopold, and recognised that a sound state of finances is essential to the prosperity of a State, and that the Jews still retained something of their old renown as good financiers. In the Mark of Brandenburg no Jew had been allowed to dwell for a hundred years after their expulsion under the Elector John George. Frederick William himself took the step so difficult for many; he wrote (April, 1670) to his ambassador, Andrew Neumann, at Vienna, that he was inclined to receive into the Electoral Mark from forty to fifty respectable Jewish families of the exiles from Vienna under certain conditions and limitations. The conditions imposed,

which were made known a year later, proved in many points very harsh, but were nevertheless more favourable than in other Protestant countries, as, for instance, in the bigoted city of Hamburg. The Jews might settle where they pleased in Brandenburg and in the Duchy of Crossen, and might trade everywhere without hindrance. The burgomasters were directed to place no impediment in the way of their settlement and not to molest them. Every family had to pay eight thalers a year as a tax for protection, a gold florin for every marriage, and the same for every funeral; on the other hand, they were freed from the poll-tax throughout the country. They might buy and sell houses, but on condition that after the expiration of a term they must sell them to Christians. They were not permitted to have synagogues, but could have prayer-rooms, and appoint a schoolmaster and a butcher (Shochet). This charter of protection was only valid for twenty years, but a prospect was held out that it might be prolonged by the Elector or his successor. Of these fifty Austrian families, some seven settled in Berlin, and formed the foundation of the community which afterwards became so large and influential. One step led to another. Frederick William also admitted rich Jews from Hamburg, Glogau, and other cities, and thus communities sprang up at Landsberg and Frankfort-on-the-Oder.

One cannot fail to see that Frederick William admitted the Jews purely from financial considerations. But he occasionally showed unselfish goodwill towards some among them. He agreed to the experimental plan of a member of the Swedish Reichsrath (Imperial Parliament), named Skytte, to found, at Tangermünde in the Mark, a university for all sciences and an asylum for persecuted savants. He did not fail, according to his programme, to admit into this Athens of the Mark, Jewish men of learning, as well as Arabians and unbelievers of

every kind, but on condition that they should keep their errors to themselves, and not spread them abroad. At another spot in Christian Europe the Jews also experienced alternately justice and persecution. About the same time that the Jews were expelled from Vienna, a false accusation, which might have had far-reaching consequences, cropped up against the Jews of a city, which at that time was under German rule. In the city of Metz, during the course of a century, a considerable community, descended from four Jewish families, had sprung up, and had appointed its own Rabbi since the beginning of the seventeenth century. The Jews of Metz behaved so well that King Louis XIV. publicly declared his satisfaction with them, and renewed their privileges. But as Metz still had at that time a German Constitution, trade was in the hands of narrow-minded guilds, and these wished to limit the Jews absolutely in their occupation. Thwarted in this attempt before the magistrates, some of them roused in the populace a burning hatred of the Jews. A peasant had lost a child, and the news quickly spread that the Jews had killed it to practise sorcery with its flesh. The accusation was brought specifically against a pedlar, Raphael Levi. Scraps of paper, with Hebrew letters upon them, which Raphael Levi had written during his imprisonment, served as proofs of his guilt. A baptized Jew, Paul du Vallié (Vallier, formerly Isaac), son of a famous physician in that district, translated the written scraps, with the aid of another Jewish convert, to the disadvantage of the accused.

Du Vallié had been just enticed into the bosom of Christianity, and had become a bitter enemy of his former co-religionists. He had been a good son, and adored by his parents. He had also been a pious Jew, and had declared to the two priests who had tried to influence him to apostatise from Judaism that he would sooner be burned. Nevertheless,



the priests continued their efforts until they induced him to accept Christianity. The news of his baptism had broken the heart of his mother, Antoinette. A touching letter to her son, in French, is still extant, in which she entreats him to return to Judaism. Du Vallié however refused, but proved himself to be a bad man and a traitor, and now brought false evidence against the poor accused Jew. Accordingly, Raphael Levi was stretched on the rack, and, though he maintained his innocence in a tone of convincing truth, he was condemned by the Metz Parliament, and put to death with torture which he resolutely bore (January, 1670). The Parliament continued the persecution. The enemies of the Jews, moreover, caused a document to be printed on the subject and widely circulated, in order to produce the proper effect. But the Metz community found a supporter in a zealous fellow-believer, Jonah Salvador, a tobacco dealer, of Pignerol. He was learned in the Talmud, and a follower of Sabbataï Zevi. Richard Simon, a man who was a friend of learning, sought him out in order to study Hebrew under his guidance. Jonah Salvador managed to interest this Father of the Oratoire on behalf of the Metz community, and induced him to draw up a vindication of the innocence of the Jews respecting the murder of the Christian child. The tobacco merchant of Pignerol delivered this document to persons at Court whose word had weight, and this turned the scale. The king's Council ordered the records of the Metz Parliament to be sent in, and gave judgment (end of 1671) that a judicial murder had been committed in the case of Raphael Levi. Louis XIV. ordered that henceforth criminal charges against Jews should always be brought before the king's Supreme Council.

Thus the inhuman treatment of the Jews, their banishments, the false accusations against them, and

massacres did not actually cease, but their number and extent diminished. This phenomenon was a natural consequence of the increasing civilisation of the European capitals, but a growing predilection for the Jews and their brilliant literature had also a share in their improved treatment. Educated Christians, Catholics as well as Protestants, who were sober men, not biassed by enthusiasm, and who took the lead in matters of opinion, began to be astonished at the continued existence of this people. How was it that a people, who for ten centuries and more had been persecuted, trampled under foot, and treated like a pack of venomous or noisome beasts—a people without a home, and on whom all the world laid hands—how was it that this people still existed—nay, not only existed, but formed a compact body, separate from other peoples, and even in their subjection too proud to mingle with more powerful nations? Numerous writers appeared as apologists for them, urging their milder treatment, and appealing earnestly to Christians that they should not destroy or injure this living marvel. Many went very far in their enthusiasm for the Jews. The Huguenot preacher, Pierre Jürieu, at Rotterdam, wrote a book (1685) about “the fulfilment of prophecy,” in which he expounded the future greatness of the Jews as certain—that God had kept this nation for Himself in order to do great wonders for it: the true Antichrist was the persecution of the Jews. A Dane, Oliger (Holger) Pauli, displayed an over-zealous activity for the return of the Jewish people to their future country. He, when a youth, had visions of the coming greatness of Israel, in which he also was to play a part. Oliger Pauli was so fond of the Jewish race that, although descended from Christian ancestors of noble rank, he always gave out that he had sprung from a Jewish stock. He had amassed millions as a merchant, and he spent them

all lavishly for his hobby, to furthering the return of the Jews to Palestine. Oliger Pauli sent mystical letters to King William III. of England and the Dauphin of France to incline them towards the assembling and restoration of the Jews. To the Dauphin the Danish enthusiast plainly declared that by zeal for the Jews, France might atone for her bloody massacre of St. Bartholomew and the dragonades. John Peter Speeth of Augsburg, born of Catholic parents at Vienna, went still farther in his enthusiasm for Jews and Judaism. After he had written a pamphlet in honour of Catholicism, he went over to the Socinians and Menonites, and at last became a Jew at Amsterdam, and took the name of Moses Germanus (died 17th April, 1702). As he expressed himself, the false accusations against the Jews had simply inspired him with disgust for Christianity.

“Even at the present time much of the same sort of thing happens in Poland and Germany, where it is circumstantially related, and songs are sung in the streets, how the Jews have again murdered a child and sent the blood to one another in quills for the use of their wives labouring with child. I have discovered this outrageous fraud in time, and abandoned Christianity, which can thus behave, in order to have no share in it nor be found with those who trample under foot and shed like water the blood of Israel, the first and only begotten Son of God.”

Moses Germanus was a Paul reversed. This latter became, as a Christian, a zealous despiser of Judaism; the other, as a Jew, an equally fanatical opponent of Christianity. He regarded the origin of it as a gross fraud. One cannot even now write down all that Moses Germanus uttered about the teaching of Jesus. He was not the only Christian who at this time “from love for Judaism” exposed himself to the painful operation and still keener shame and reproach of circumcision. In one year three Christians in free Amsterdam alone went over to Judaism, amongst them a student from Prague.



But even more than the anticipated future greatness of Israel, Jewish literature now began to attract learned Christians and inspire them with a sort of sympathy for the people out of whose mine such treasures came forth. The Hebrew language was studied by Christians even more regularly than in the beginning of the seventeenth century. In the middle and towards the close of that century Hebrew Rabbinical literature was most eagerly searched, translated into Latin or modern languages, studied, utilised and applied. "Jewish learning" had become, not as before, a mere ornament, but an indispensable element of learning. It was regarded as a disgrace for Catholic and Protestant theologians to be ignorant of Rabbinical lore, and the ignorant could only defend themselves by abusing these Hebraists as semi-Rabbis.

The first Catholic critic, Father Richard Simon, of the congregation of the Oratoire at Paris, contributed very much to the high esteem in which the Jews and their literature were held. This man, who laid the foundation of a scientific, philological and exegetical study of the Old and New Testament, investigated Jewish writings with great zeal and utilised them for his purpose. He was gifted with a keen understanding, and had unconsciously gone beyond the limits of Catholic doctrine. Spinoza's critical remarks on the Bible induced him to make original inquiries, and since as a genuine Frenchman he was endowed with sound sense rather than metaphysical imagination, he was more successful in his inquiries and raised them to the level of a science. Richard Simon was disgusted with the Biblical exegesis of the Protestants, who were wont to overlay all their wisdom and dulness with verses of Holy Scripture. He undertook, therefore, to prove that the whole Biblical knowledge and Biblical explanation of the Protestant Church, on which it prided itself as compared with

the Catholics and the Jews, was mere mist and error, because it mistook the sense of the original text, and had no conception of historical background or the colouring of time and place characterising the books of the Bible, and in this ignorance multiplied absurd dogmas.

“You Protestants appeal to the pure word of God in order to battle against the Catholic tradition; I intend to withdraw the ground from under you, and to leave you, so to speak, with your legs dangling in the air.”

Richard Simon was the predecessor of Reimarus and David Strauss. The Catholics applauded him—even the mild Bishop Bossuet, who at first had opposed him from conceit—not dreaming that they were nourishing a serpent in their bosom. In his master-piece, “The Critical History of the Old Testament,” he set himself to the task of proving that the written word in no way suffices for the faith. Richard Simon appreciated with a master’s eye, and as no one had done before him, the wide extent of a new science—Biblical criticism. Although he criticised freely, he proceeded apologetically, vindicated the sacred character of the Bible, and repelled Spinoza’s attacks upon its trustworthiness. Richard Simon’s writings, which were not composed in Latin, but in the vernacular, were marked by a certain elegance of style, and attracted well-deserved attention. They form an agreeable contrast to the chaos of oppressive learning of the time, and have a homely air about them. Hence they were eagerly read by all the educated classes, and even by ladies. Simon accorded a wide space to Jewish literature and also subjoined a list of Jewish writers. By this means Rabbinical literature became known in the educated world even more than through the efforts of Reuchlin, Scaliger, the two Buxtorfs, and the learned men of Holland who wrote in Latin.

In order to gain a comprehensive knowledge of this literature, Richard Simon was obliged, like Reuchlin before him, to seek out the acquaintance of Jews; in particular he associated with Jonah Salvador, the Italian Sabbatian. By this means he lost a part of his prejudice against the Jews, which still existed in France in its full intensity. He was drawn to the Jews in yet another direction. While he laid stress on Catholic tradition as opposed to the literal belief of the Protestants, he felt himself in some degree related to the Talmudists and Rabbanites. They also upheld their tradition against the literal belief of the Karaites. Richard Simon, therefore, exalted Rabbinical Judaism in the introduction and supplements of his work, which he added to his translation of Leon Modena's "Rites." Familiar as few of his time or of a later period with the whole of Jewish literature, Richard Simon refrained from making the boastful assertion, grounded upon ignorance, that Christianity is something peculiar, fundamentally different to Judaism and far more exalted. He recognised the truth, and had the courage to declare it, that Christianity in its substance and form was moulded after the pattern of Judaism and could not avoid becoming like it again.

"Since the Christian religion has its origin in Judaism, I doubt not that the perusal of this little book (the 'Rites') will contribute to the understanding of the New Testament, on account of the similarity and close connection which it has with the Old. A portion of our ceremonies also are derived from the Jews. . . . The Christian religion has this besides in common with the Jewish, that each is based on Holy Scripture, on the tradition of the fathers, on ordinary uses and customs. . . . One cannot sufficiently admire the modesty and inward devotion of the Jews, as they go to prayer in the morning. . . . The Jews distinguish themselves, not only in praying, but also in deeds of mercy, and one thinks one sees, in the sympathy which they have for the poor, the image of the love of the first Christians for their brethren. Men followed then that which the Jews have still retained to this day, while we (Christians) have scarcely kept up the remembrance of it."

Richard Simon declared almost deplorably that the Jews, formerly so learned in France, and who



looked upon Paris as their Athens, had been driven out of that country. He defended them against the accusation of their pretended hatred of Christians and brought forward the fact that they pray for the welfare of the state and its princes. His predilection for tradition went so far, that he maintained that the College of Cardinals at Rome, the supreme court of Christendom, was formed on the pattern of the Synhedrion at Jerusalem, and that the Pope corresponded to the president of it, the Nassi. Whilst he compared the Catholics to the Rabbanites, he called the Protestants simply Karaites, and wrote in jest to his Protestant friends, "My dear Karaites." It has been already mentioned that Richard Simon interested himself zealously for the Jews of Metz, when they were accused of murdering a Christian child. When other opportunities offered, he defended the Jews against false accusations and suspicions. A baptised Jew, Christian Gerson, who had become a Protestant pastor, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in order to abuse the Talmud, had made extracts in the shape of ridiculous legends, which were printed and published in many editions. Richard Simon, on the other hand, wrote to a Swiss, who was about to translate these German extracts into French, that Gerson ought not to be acquitted of blame for having passed off plays upon words and purely allegorical terms of expression in the Talmud as serious narratives. Gerson imputed to the whole Jewish nation certain errors, which were only accepted by the credulous, who were unable to distinguish fiction from fact, and he, therefore, abused the Talmud. It must not be forgotten that it was a distinguished ecclesiastic and, moreover, a sober and moderate man, who spoke thus favourably of Judaism. His books and letters, written in a lively French style and much read by the educated world, gained many friends for Judaism, or at least

lessened the number of its enemies. The official Catholic world, however, appears to have reprimanded this eulogist of Judaism, and Richard Simon, who loved peace, was obliged partially to recant his praises.

“I have said too much good of this wretched nation, and through intercourse with some of them I have since learned to know them.”

This cannot have been spoken from his heart, for he was not wont to judge and condemn a whole class of men by a few individuals.

The attention paid to the Jews and their literature on the part of Christian men of learning and princes, brought to light here and there some droll circumstances. In Sweden, the most bigoted Protestant country, no Jew, and of course no Catholic, was allowed to dwell. Nevertheless King Charles XI. felt extraordinary interest in the Jews, and still more in the sect of the Karaites, who pretended to follow the pure word of God without the accretions of tradition, and who were said to bear great resemblance to the Protestants. Would it not be easy to bring over to Christianity these people who were not entangled in the web of the Talmud? Charles XI. accordingly sent a professor of Upsala, learned in Hebrew literature, Gustavus Peringer, of Lilienblad (about 1690), to Poland for the purpose of seeking out the Karaites, of informing himself of their manner of life and customs, and especially of buying their writings without regard to cost. Provided with letters of recommendation to the King of Poland, Peringer travelled first of all to Lithuania, where dwelt several Karaite communities. But the Polish and Lithuanian Karaites were reduced even more than their brethren in Constantinople, in the Crimea and in Egypt. There were only very few men of information among them who knew some details about their origin and the history of their sect; not one

had any accurate information. Just about this time the Polish king, John Sobieski, had ordered, through a Karaite judge, Abraham ben Samuel of Trok, who was in favour with him, that the Jews for some unknown object, should remove from their head-quarters of Trok, Luzk, and Halicz, and settle in other small towns; they obeyed and dispersed as far as the northern province of Samogitia. Thus cut off from their centre, isolated, avoiding intercourse with Rabbis, and mixing only with the Polish rustic population, the Polish Karaites became more and more boorish themselves and sank into a profound lethargy.

Whether Peringer even partially fulfilled the wish of his king is not known; probably he altogether failed in his mission. Some years later (1696-97), two learned Swedes, probably also commissioned by Charles XI., again travelled into Lithuania to visit Karaite communities and to buy up their writings. At the same time they invited some Karaites to visit Sweden, in order to give oral information respecting their doctrines. Zeal for conversion had certainly more share in the matter than curiosity about the unknown. A young Karaite, Samuel ben Aaron, who had settled at Poswol in Samogitia, and understood some Latin, resolved to make a journey to a royal official at Riga, John Puffendorf, and hold a conference with him. Through the want of literary sources and the ignorance of the Karaites concerning the historical origin and development of their sect, Samuel ben Aaron could only give a scanty account in a writing, the title of which proves the fancifulness which had penetrated even into the Karaite circle.

From another side also the Karaites were the object of eager inquiry. A professor at Leyden, Jacob Trigland, fairly well acquainted with Hebrew literature, who intended to write a book about the old, obsolete Jewish sects, had his attention



directed to the still existing Karaites. Inspired by the wish to get information concerning the Polish Karaites and to obtain possession of their writings, he sent a letter with various questions through known mercantile houses to the Karaites, to which he solicited an answer. This letter accidentally fell into the hands of a Karaite, Mordecai ben Nissan, at Luzk, a poor official of the community, who did not know enough to give the desired information as to the beginning and cause of the schism between the Rabbanites and Karaites. But he regarded it as a point of honour to avail himself of this opportunity of bringing the forgotten Karaites before the remembrance of the Christian world through the instrumentality of a Christian writer, and to deal some blows at their opponents, the Rabbanite Jews. He spared no sacrifice to procure the few books by which he might be able to instruct himself and his correspondent Trigland. These materials, however, were not worth much, and Mordecai's dissertation proved unsatisfactory to Trigland, but for want of a better work it had the good fortune to serve during nearly a century and a-half as the only source for the history of Karaism. Some years later, when Charles XII., the hero of the North, conquered Poland in his victorious career, and like his father was anxious to have more precise intelligence respecting the Karaites, he also made inquiries concerning them on the spot. Mordecai ben Nissan used this occasion to compose a work in Hebrew for Charles XII., in which he freely indulged his hatred against the Rabbanites, and strained every nerve to make Talmudical literature ridiculous.

The zealous attention paid by Christians in learned circles to Jewish literature could not fail to cause much annoyance and inconvenience to the Jews. They felt sorely burdened by German Protestant literati, who strove to rival the Dutch writers and Richard Simon in France, and who

wrote with pedantic learning, but without the mild and gentle toleration towards the Jews or the elegance of style of the former. Almost at the same time three German Hebraists, Wülfer, Wagen-seil and Eisenmenger made capital of their knowledge of Hebrew literature in order to bring accusations against the Jews. All three associated much with Jews, learned from them, and plunged deeply into Jewish literature, actually mastering it to a certain degree.

John Wülfer of Nuremberg, who was educated to be a priest, and had studied with a Jew of Fürth and afterwards in Italy, was thoroughly acquainted with Biblical and Talmudical literature, sought after Hebrew manuscripts and old Jewish Prayer-books to enable him to found an accusation against the Jews. Christians, instigated by baptised Jews, took offence at a beautiful form of prayer (Alenu), which arose in a time and country when as yet there was little talk of Christianity. Some Jews were wont, it was said, to add a sentence to this prayer: "For they (the heathen) pray to a vain, empty breath." In the word "empty" the enemies of the Jews pretended to see an allusion to Jesus and to find blasphemy against him. This sentence was not printed in the Prayer-books. But in many copies a blank space was left for it. This vacant space, or the presence of the obnoxious word, equally enraged the Protestants, and Wülfer therefore looked about in libraries to find authority for it, and when he found the word in manuscripts, he did not fail to publish his discovery. He praised Prince George of Hesse because he made his Jews swear an oath that they would never utter a blasphemous word against Jesus, and because he threatened to punish them with death in case of transgression. But Wülfer was in other respects candid enough to confess that the Jews had been long and cruelly punished by the Christians, that

the accusation against them of using blood was a mischievous invention, and that the testimony of baptised Jews, their former friends, deserved little credit.

John Christopher Wagenseil, a lawyer and professor at Altorf, was a good-hearted man, and kindly disposed towards the Jews. He had travelled farther than Wülfer, had penetrated through Spain into Africa, and took the greatest pains to hunt up such Jewish writings as attacked Christianity from the ground of Holy Scripture or with the weapons of reason. By aid of his discoveries he filled his quiver "with the devil's fiery darts." Wagenseil also looked for that insipid compilation of the magical miracles of Jesus (Toldot Jesho), with which a Jew, who had been persecuted by the Christians, tried to ridicule the Founder of Christianity, and he spent much money in hunting up this Hebrew parody of the Gospel; for only a few Jews possessed copies of it, and the owners kept them under lock and key for their own security. Because one Jew had once written these absurdities about Jesus, and some Jews had copies of the book in their possession, while others again had defended themselves against attacks on the part of Christians, Wagenseil felt assured that the Jews of his own time were vile blasphemers of Jesus. He therefore implored the princes and civil magistrates to forbid the Jews most strictly to continue such blasphemy. He directed a pamphlet of his own, "The Christian Denunciation," to all high potentates, urging them to impose a formal oath upon the Jews, that they should not utter any word of mockery against Jesus, Mary, the Cross, the Mass and other Christian sacraments. Wagenseil had two pious wishes besides. One was that the Protestant princes should take active steps for the conversion of the Jews. He had convinced himself that at Rome, where since the time of Pope Gregory



XIII. a Dominican monk was wont on certain Sabbaths to hold forth annually, in a sleepy manner, before a number of Jews, who either ignored or mocked at him. But Wagenseil thought that the Protestant princes, who were more zealous Christians than the Catholic nobles, ought to make a better beginning. It also grieved this learned pedant that the colleges of Rabbis presumed to criticise writings concerning the Jewish religion, and that they ventured to express their approval or disapproval; for this was an infringement of the rights and dignity of Christians! But withal Wagenseil, as has been said, was kindly disposed to the Jews. He remarked with emphasis that he thought it wrong and unworthy to do three things—to scorch and burn the Jews, to rob them of all their property, or to drive them with their wives and children out of the country. It was excessively cruel that in Germany and other countries the children of the Jews should be baptised against the will of their parents and compelled by force to learn the doctrines of Christ. The oppressions and insults to which they were exposed at the hands of the Christian rabble were by no means to be approved. It was not right that they should be compelled to say “Christ is risen,” that they should be assailed with blows, have dirt and stones thrown at them, and should not be allowed to go about in safety. Wagenseil himself wrote a pamphlet to expose most clearly the horrible falsehood that the Jews use the blood of Christians. For the sake of this pamphlet, which spoke so warmly for the Jews, his other absurdities should be pardoned. Wagenseil expressed his indignation at the horrible lie.

“It might, indeed, pass if the matter stopped with idle gossip; but that on account of this execrable falsehood the Jews have been tormented, punished and executed by thousands, should move even stones to compassion and make them cry out.”

Could it be believed that in the face of this

judgment, spoken with firm conviction by Wülfer and Wagenseil, who had not only associated with Jews for years, but were accurately acquainted with Jewish literature, and had penetrated into its innermost recesses as no one before them, that notwithstanding these facts their contemporaries should seriously revive the horrible falsehood again, and justify it with a show of authority? A Protestant, John Andrew Eisenmenger, professor of Oriental languages, repeated the accusation, which had been a thousand times branded as false, and thereby furnished posterity with abundant material for charges against the Jews. Eisenmenger belonged to the class of insects which sucks poison even out of flowers. In confidential converse with Jews, to whom he pretended that he desired to be converted to Judaism, and in the profound study of their literature, which he learned from them, he looked only on the dark side.

He compiled a venomous book in two volumes, the title of which alone was an invitation to Christians to massacre the Jews, and was synonymous with a repetition of earlier scenes of horror for the Jews.

“Judaism Unmasked ; or an Original and True Account of the Way in which the Stubborn Jews frightfully blaspheme and dishonour the Holy Trinity, revile the Holy Mother of Christ, mockingly criticise the New Testament, the Evangelists, the Apostles and the Christian Religion, and despise and curse to the Uttermost Extreme the whole of Christianity. At the same time much else besides, either not at all or very little known, and Gross Errors of the Jewish Religion and Theology, as well as Ridiculous and Amusing Stories, herein appear. All proved from their own Books. Written for the Honest Information of all Christians.”

Eisenmenger intended hurling Wagenseil's “fiery darts of Satan” with deadly aim at the Jews. If he had simply brought out detached sentences from the Talmudical and later Rabbinical literature and anti-Christian writings, translated them, and drawn conclusions from them hostile to the Jews, he would only have proved his mental weakness. But Eisen-

menger represented as indisputable facts the most horrible falsehoods, as Wagenseil had called them. He adduced a whole chapter of proofs showing that it was not lawful for Jews to save a Christian even from danger to life, that the Rabbinical laws command the slaughter of Christians, and that no confidence should be placed in Jewish physicians, nor ought their medicines to be taken. He repeated all the false stories of murders committed by Jews against Christians, of the poisoning of wells by Jews at the time of the Black Death, of the poisoning of the Elector of Brandenburg, Joachim II., by his Jewish mint-master; of Raphael Levi's child-murder at Metz—in short, all that had ever been invented by saintly simplicity, priestly fraud, or excited fanaticism and had been imputed to the Jews. The fabrication of the martyrdom of little Simon of Trent had been clearly proved at the time by the Doge and Senate of Venice on authentic evidence. Not only the Jewish writers, Isaac Viva and Isaac Cardoso, but also Christians, like Wülfer and Wagenseil, recognised these authorities as genuine, and represented the charge against the Jews of Trent as a crying injustice. Eisenmenger did not care about that, but declared that the vindictory judgments were forged, and maintained the bloodthirstiness of the Jews with fiery zeal and energy. One would be justified in ascribing his proceedings against the Jews either to brutality or to simple avarice. For although very learned in Hebrew, he was otherwise uninformed, and would have allowed himself to be bribed in solid coin into silence with regard to the Jews. But for the honour of humanity one would rather impute his course to ignorance; he had stayed a long time at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, formerly the chief centre of hatred to the Jews in Germany, and he may there have imbibed his bitter animosity and have wished, at first from conscientious motives, to blacken the character of the Jews.



Some Jews had got wind of the printing of Eisenmenger's work at Frankfort, and were not a little alarmed at the danger which threatened them. For the old prejudices of the masses and of the ecclesiastics against the Jews, which were stronger amongst the Protestants than the Catholics, still existed too strongly for a firebrand publication in German to pass off without doing mischief wherever it came. The Jews of Frankfort therefore placed themselves in communication with the Court-Jews at Vienna in order to meet the danger. The emperor, Leopold I., who from want of money after the Turkish war, at the instigation of the empress and her father-confessor, had expelled the Jews from Vienna, allowed some rich Jews, scarcely fifteen years later, to settle down again in the capital. Samuel Oppenheim, of Heidelberg, a banker and one of the noblest men among the Jews, whose heart and hand were open to all sufferers, probably brought about this concession. As before, several Jewish families came with him to Vienna, probably as his servants. Samuel Oppenheim zealously endeavoured to prevent the circulation of Eisenmenger's book against the Jews. He had experienced the same year what a Christian rabble instigated by hatred of the Jews could do. A riotous assault was made upon his house, which was broken into by force, and everything there, including the money-chest, was plundered (17th July, 1700). Hence from personal motives and on public grounds Samuel Oppenheim exerted himself to prevent the 2,000 copies of Eisenmenger's work from seeing the light of day. He and the other Jews could justly maintain that the publication of this book in German, though in an unattractive style, would lead to the massacre of the Jews. An edict was therefore issued by the emperor forbidding its dissemination. Eisenmenger was doubly disappointed; he could not wreak his hatred on the Jews, he had lost the whole of his pro-

perty, which he had spent on the printing, and was also obliged to incur debts. All the copies, except a few which he was able to secrete, lay at Frankfort under lock and key. He then entered into negotiations with the Jews; he proposed to destroy his work for 90,000 marks. As the Jews offered scarcely half that sum, the confiscation remained in force, and Eisenmenger died of vexation because he had been deceived in all his hopes.

But the matter did not terminate there. Frederick I., the newly-crowned King of Prussia, took a lively interest in the book. The attention of this prince was keenly directed to the Jews from various causes. Already at the beginning of the eighteenth century more than a thousand Jews dwelt in his domains. The community of Berlin had grown in thirty years since their first admission from twelve to some seventy families. Frederick I., who was captivated with outward splendour, had not any particular partiality for the Jews, but he valued them for the income derived from them. The Court jeweller, Jost Liebmann, was highly esteemed at the Court, because he supplied pearls and trinkets on credit, and thus held an exceptionally favourable position. It was said that Liebmann's wife must have taken the fancy of the prince, and she certainly obtained the freedom of entering the king's apartment unannounced. Through her the Jews received permission to have a cemetery in Königsberg; but the money of the Jews was even more highly prized by this king than his Jewish favourites. Frederick, who while as yet only Elector had thought of banishing all the Jews, tolerated them for the safety tax which they had to pay—100 ducats yearly, but they were subjected to severe restrictions—amongst others they could not own houses and lands. Yet they were allowed to have synagogues, first a private one granted as a favour to the Court jeweller,

Jost Liebmann and the family of David Reiss, an immigrant from Austria, and then, owing to the frequent disputes about rights and privileges, a public synagogue as well.

Two maliciously disposed baptised Jews, Christian Kahtz and Francis Wenzel, sought to prejudice the feeling of the new king and the population against the Jews. "Blasphemy against Jesus"—so runs the lying charge; the prayer "Alenu" and others were cited as proofs that the Jews pronounced the name of Jesus with contumely, and that they spat in doing so. The Guilds in general not being well disposed to the Jews, utilised this excitement for fanatical persecution, and such bitter feeling arose in the cities and villages against the Jews, that (as they expressed themselves, perhaps knowingly exaggerating) their life was no longer safe. King Frederick, however, proposed a course which does honour to his good sense. He issued a command (December, 1700) to all the presidents of departments that they should call together the Rabbis and, in default of them, the Jewish schoolmasters and elders on a certain day, and ask them on oath whether they expressly uttered or made silent use of the blasphemous word "va-rik" against Jesus. The Jews everywhere solemnly declared on oath that they did not refer to Jesus in this prayer, nor at the place where the lacuna was left in the prayer-books. John Henry Michaelis, the theologian, of Halle, who was asked respecting the character of the Jews, pronounced them free from the blasphemy of which they were accused. But since the king continued to suspect the Jews of reviling Jesus in thought, he issued orders which were quite characteristic of the time (1703). It was his heart's wish that the people of Israel, whom the Lord had once loved and chosen as His own peculiar possession, should be



brought to the communion of the faith. Frederick did not, however, presume to exercise control over their consciences, but desired to leave the conversion of the Jews to time and God's wise counsel. Also he would not bind them by oath to refrain from uttering in prayer the words of which they were accused. But he commanded them on pain of punishment to refrain from those words, to cease to utter the prayer "Alenu" aloud, or to spit while so doing. Spies were appointed from time to time to visit the synagogues, as eleven centuries before had been done in the Byzantine empire, in order to observe whether the conclusion of the prayer in question was pronounced aloud or in a whisper.

Eisenmenger before his death, and his heirs after him, knowing that the King of Prussia was inclined to listen to accusations against the Jews, had applied to him to entreat the Emperor Leopold, that the book against the Jews, entitled "Judaism Unmasked," should be released from ban and prohibition. Frederick I. interested himself warmly in the matter, and sent a kind of petition to the Emperor Leopold II. (25th April, 1705), very characteristic of the tone of that time. The king represented that Eisenmenger had sunk all his money in this book and had died of vexation through the imperial prohibition. It would be lowering to Christianity if the Jews should be so powerful as to be able to suppress a book written in defence of Christianity and in refutation of Jewish errors. There was no reason to apprehend, as the Jews pretended, that it would incite the people to a violent onslaught against them, since similar writings had lately appeared which had done them no harm. Eisenmenger's book also aimed chiefly at the promotion of Christianity, so that Christians might not, "as had repeatedly happened some years ago, be induced to revolt from it and become adherents of Judaism." But the Emperor Leopold would not remove the

ban from Eisenmenger's book. King Frederick repeated his request three years later, at the desire of Eisenmenger's heirs, to the Emperor Joseph I. But with him also King Frederick found no favourable hearing, and the 2,000 copies of "Judaism Unmasked" remained at Frankfort under ban for forty years. But with Frederick's approval a second edition was brought out at Königsberg, where the imperial censorship had no power. For the moment it had no such effect as the one side had hoped and the other feared; but, later on, when the question arose about regarding the Jews as men and citizens, entitled to civic rights, it proved an armoury for their malicious or indolent opponents.

King Frederick I. was often urged by enemies of the Jews to make his royal authority a cloak for their villainy. The bright and the dark side of the general appreciation of Jewish literature were evinced very clearly. In Holland, which was likewise a Protestant country, a Christian scholar of this period cherished a great enthusiasm for the Mishna, that backbone of Talmudical Judaism. William Surenhuysius, a young man of Amsterdam, in the course of many years translated the Mishna into Latin with two commentaries upon it (printed 1698-1703). He displayed in this work a more than usual amount of Dutch industry and application. Love in fact was needed to undertake such a study, to persevere in it and to finish the work in a clear and attractive style. No language and literature presents so many difficulties as this dialect, now almost obsolete, as regards the objects which it describes and the form in which it is cast. Surenhuysius sat indeed at the feet of Jewish teachers, of whom there were many at Amsterdam, and he was extremely grateful for their help. But their assistance did not lead him to lay aside his own activity and devotion. He was influenced by the conviction that the Oral Law,

the Mishna, is in its main contents as divine as the written word of the Bible. He desired that Christian youths in training for theology and the clerical profession, should not devote themselves to the seductions of classical literature, but by engaging in the study of the Mishna should, as it were, receive ordination beforehand.

“He who desires to be a good and worthy disciple of Christ must first become a Jew, or he must first learn thoroughly the language and culture of the Jews, and become Moses’s disciple before he joins the Apostles, in order that he may be able through Moses and the prophets to convince men that Jesus is the Messiah.”

In this enthusiastic admiration for the corner-stone of the edifice of Judaism, which the builders up of culture were wont to despise, Surenhuysius included the people who owned these laws. He cordially thanked the senate of Amsterdam because they specially protected the Jews.

“Inasmuch as this people once surpassed all other peoples, give it preference, worthy men! The old renown and dignity, which this people and the citizens of Jerusalem once possessed, is now yours. For the Jews at heart belong to you, not overcome by force of arms, but won over by humanity and wisdom; they come to you, and are happy to obey your republican form of government.”

Surenhuysius was outspoken in his displeasure against those who having learned what served their interest from the Jewish Scriptures, reviled and threw dust at them, “like highwaymen, who, after they have robbed an honest man of all his clothes, beat him to death with cudgels or send him away with scorn.” He formed a plan for making the entire contents of Rabbinical literature accessible to the learned world through the Latin language. While Surenhuysius of Amsterdam felt such enthusiasm for this not altogether brilliant side of Judaism, and saw in it a means of promoting Christianity (in which view he did not stand alone), a vile Polish Jew, named Aaron Margalita, who had gone over to Christianity for the sake of gain, at the same time brought fresh accusations of blasphemy against



Christianity before King Frederick of Prussia from an utterly harmless part of Jewish literature—the old Agada. An edition of the Midrash Rabba (1705), published at Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, was accordingly put under a ban by the king's command until Christian theologians should pronounce judgment upon it.

The result of this taste for Jewish literature and of the literary labours on the part of learned Christians which became much enriched thereby, was an interesting historical work concerning the Jews and Judaism, which to some extent terminates the old epoch and inaugurates a new one. Jacob Basnage (born 1653, died 1723), of noble character, a Protestant theologian, a solid historian, a pleasant author and a person held in high esteem generally, rendered incalculable service to Judaism. He explained the results of the laborious researches of learned men, popularised them, and made them accessible to all educated circles. In his assiduous historical inquiries, especially as to the development of the Church, Basnage came into contact with the Jews at almost every step. He had a presentiment that the Jewish people had not, as ordinary theologians thought, through the loss of its political independence and the spread of Christianity, become utterly bankrupt and annihilated, being now but the ghost of its former self. The great sufferings of this people and their rich literature inspired him with a feeling of awe. His sense of truth with regard to historical events would not allow him to dismiss facts and explain them away with empty phrases. Basnage undertook to compile the "History of the Jews or the Jewish Religion," so far as it was known to him, from Jesus down to his own times. He laboured on this work for more than five years. He intended to continue the history of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus after the dispersion of the Jewish people.

Basnage strove, as far as was possible to a staunch Protestant at that time, to represent and judge of events in an impartial manner.

“ Christians must not be surprised if we often acquit the Jews of sins of which they are not guilty, since justice so requires. No partiality is implied in accusing those of injustice and oppression who have been guilty of them. We have no intention of injuring the Jews any more than of flattering them. In the decay and dregs of centuries men were possessed with a spirit of cruelty and barbarism towards the Jews. They were accused of being the cause of all the disasters which happened, and charged with a multitude of crimes of which they never even dreamed. Numberless miracles were invented in order thereby to convict them, or rather in order the more loudly to satisfy hatred under the shade of religion. We have made a collection of laws, which councils and princes published against them, by means of which people can judge of the malice of the former and the oppression of the latter. Men did not, however, confine themselves to the edicts, but everywhere military executions, popular riots and massacres took place. Yet, by a miracle of Providence, which must excite the astonishment of all Christians, this hated nation, persecuted in all places for a great number of centuries, still exists everywhere. Peoples and kings, heathens, Christians and Mahometans, opposed to one another in so many points, have agreed in the purpose of destroying this nation, and they have not succeeded. The bush of Moses, surrounded by flames, has ever burned without being consumed. The Jews have been driven out of all the cities in the world, and this has only served to spread them abroad in all cities. They still live in spite of the contempt and hatred which follow them everywhere, while the greatest monarchies have fallen, and are known to us only by name.”

Basnage, who by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes through the Catholic intolerance of Louis XIV. was banished to Holland, could to some degree appreciate the feelings of the Jews during their long exile. He also acquired much knowledge of Jewish literature in order to consult the authorities in the execution of his work. The historical labours of Abraham Ibn Daud, Ibn Yachya, Ibn Verga, David Gans, and others were not neglected; they served as the corner-stone for Basnage, whereon he reared the great fabric of Jewish history of the sixteen centuries after the origin of Christianity.

But Basnage was not sufficiently an artist to unroll before the eye in glowing colours, even if in images fleeting as the mist, the sublime or tragic scenes of Jewish history. Nor had he the talent

to mass together or to marshal in groups and detachments the scattered facts consequent upon the peculiar course of this people's history. One can feel in Basnage's representation that he was oppressed and overpowered by the superabundance of details. Hence he jumbled together times and occurrences in motley confusion, divided the history into two unnatural halves, the East and the West, and described in conjunction events which have no actual connection. Of the deep inner springs of the life and deeds of the nation he had no comprehension. His Protestant creed hindered him in this; he saw the Jewish history only through the thick mist of Church history. He could not succeed in being impartial and honest despite all his efforts. "The Jews are rejected because they have rejected Jesus." In short, Basnage's "History of the Religion of the Jews" has a thousand mistakes; there is hardly a single sentence in it which can be regarded as perfectly just and in accordance with the truth.

And yet the appearance of this work was of great importance to the Jews. It circulated throughout the educated world a mass of historical information which, though rough or incoherent, was written in the fashionable French language, and this seed shot up everywhere luxuriantly. A people, which despite bloody persecutions, without a home, with no spot on the whole earth where it could lay its head or place its foot, yet possessed a history not wholly devoid of splendour—such a people was not like a gipsy horde, but must find ever-increasing consideration. Without knowing or intending to do so, and whilst casting many an aspersion upon the Jewish race, Basnage paved the way and helped to raise it from its abject condition. Christian Theophilus Unger, a pastor in Silesia, and John Christopher Wolf, a professor of Oriental languages in Hamburg, who were busily and earnestly engaged



in the study of Jewish literature and history, became Basnage's disciples, and could not have effected so much as they did in this field without his work. Both of them, and especially Wolf, filled up many gaps which Basnage had left, and testified a certain degree of warmth for the cause.

The admiration, or at least sympathy felt for the Jews at this time, induced John Toland (an Irishman, then fighting courageously against fossilized Christianity) to raise his voice on their behalf, to say that they ought to be placed on an equal footing with Christians in England and Ireland, and this was the first word spoken in favour of their emancipation. But the people, in whose favour this remarkable revulsion of sentiment had taken place in the educated world, were without knowledge of it, and felt no change in the direction of popular sentiment.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### GENERAL DEMORALISATION OF JUDAISM.

Low condition of the Jews at the end of the seventeenth century—Representatives of Culture: David Nieto, Jehuda Brieli—The Kabbala—Jewish Chroniclers—The poet Lopez Laguna translates the Psalms into Spanish—De Barrios—The race after wealth—General poverty of the Jews—Revival of Sabbatianism—Daniel Israel Bonafoux, Cardoso, Mordecai of Eisenstadt, Jacob Querido and Barachya—Sabbatianism in Poland—Abraham Cuenqui—Judah Chassid—Chayim Malach—Solomon Ayllon—Nehemiah Chayon—David Oppenheim's famous library—Chacham Zevi—The Controversy with reference to Chayon's heretical works in Amsterdam.

1700—1725.

JUST at the time when the eyes of the civilised world were directed upon the Jewish race with a certain degree of sympathy and admiration, and when, at the dawn of enlightenment in the so-called philosophical century, ecclesiastical prejudices were beginning to disappear, the members of this race were making a by no means favourable impression upon those with whom they came into contact. When they were weighed even by those who wished them well, they were found wanting in the balance. The Jews were at no time in so pitiful a plight as at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. Several circumstances had contributed to render them utterly demoralised and despised. The former teachers of Europe had, through the sad course of centuries, become childish, or actually childish dotards. Every public or historical act of the Jews bears this character of imbecility, if not of contemptibility. There was not a single cheering event, hardly a person commanding respect who could worthily

represent Judaism and bring it into estimation. There still lived the strong-minded and manly Orobio de Castro, who died in 1687, the former victim of the Inquisition, whose fidelity to his convictions, immoveable demeanour and the logical acumen with which he contested Christianity, commanded the respect of the leading opponents of Judaism. He left no successor of equal standing within the highly cultured community of Amsterdam, nor outside of it, where the conditions for an independent Jewish personality possessed of culture were entirely wanting. The leaders of the community were for the most part led astray, wandering as in a dream and stumbling at every step, but few Rabbis occupied themselves with any branch of knowledge beyond the Talmud, or entered on a new path in this study; the exceptions may be counted. Rabbi David Nieto, of London (born 1654, died 1728), was to some extent a man of culture. He was a physician, understood mathematics, was sufficiently able to take Judaism under his protection against calumnies, and, besides many platitudes, wrote also much that was reasonable. The Italian Rabbi, Jehuda Leon Brieli, of Mantua (born about 1643, died 1722) was also an important personage—a man of sound views, solid, even philosophical knowledge, who knew how to employ the vernacular in elegant form, and to defend Judaism against Christian aggressiveness. Brieli had the courage to dispense with two things, which acts were counted as worse than criminal in the eyes of his contemporaries: he remained unmarried all his life, and did not, though a Rabbi, wear a beard. But Brieli's influence on his Jewish contemporaries was very slight. He knew the weaknesses of Christianity, but had not the same sharp vision for the faults of Judaism and the Jews. Of the mischievous nature of the Zohar and the Kabbala generally, Brieli was however thoroughly aware; he wished that they



had not seen the light of day; but his critical knowledge extended no further.

Otherwise the Rabbis of this period were not of striking aspect—the Poles and Germans being for the most part pitiable figures, their heads filled with unprofitable knowledge, but otherwise ignorant and helpless as little children. The Portuguese Rabbis presented outwardly a dignified and imposing appearance, but were inwardly hollow; the Italians bore more resemblance to the Germans, but had not their learning. Thus with no guides acquainted with the road, sunk in ignorance or dim knowledge, beset with swarms of phantoms, the Jews, without exception, in all parts of the world were passing from one absurdity to another, and allowing themselves to be drawn in leading-strings by jugglers and impostors. Any absurdity, however transparent, provided only it was apparently vindicated with religious earnestness and interlarded with strained verses of Scripture, or sayings from the Talmud artificially explained, or garnished with scraps of the Kabbala, was persistently believed and propagated. The minds of men, estranged from life and true knowledge, exhausted their powers in subtleties and the superstitious errors of the Kabbala. Teachers spoke seldom or only in the words of the Talmud to their scholars; no attention was paid to delivery, for there was no oratory and no eloquence. The culminating point of the Middle Ages was reached in Jewish history at the time when it had been passed for the most part in western Europe. A wide sphere was developed for superstitious usages with a coating of religion. To write amulets (Kamea) for diseases and to exorcise them thereby was required of the Rabbis, and they devoted themselves to this work; many wished to be thought conjurors of spirits. A Rabbi Simon Baki at Casale in Italy, complained to his master, the foolish Kabbalist, Moses Zacut at

Venice, that he had used forms of conjuration according to prescription, for a lady at Turin who was supposed to be possessed, without any successful result. Thereupon the latter gave him more efficacious means, viz., whilst employing forms of prayer with the use of God's name, also to hold burning sulphur to the nose of the possessed. The more sensitively she struggled against the remedy, the more could he be convinced that she was possessed by an evil spirit. An instructed Jew of the Kabbalist school of Damascus once boasted seriously before the free-thinking critic, Richard Simon, that he could evoke a higher genie, and began making preparations. When the incredulous Father however followed his movements with a satirical laugh, the conjuror got out of the predicament with the remark that the soil of France was not suited for an apparition of spirits.

To elevate Judaism in the eyes of the nations and to represent it in a manner worthy of respect was not at this time in the power of the Jews, but they rather degraded and made it contemptible. Thoughtful Christians stood astonished before this wonderful monument of history, this people with its learning and its alternately glorious and tragic destiny; but its own sons were too dull to feel their own greatness, or sought it only in silly stories and absurd actions. Whilst Christians industriously and with feelings of amazement investigated the history of the Jews during three thousand years, the Jews had no such feeling, not even the cultivated Portuguese Jews. Manasseh ben Israel, however, had designed a book for the history of the Jews, and even suggested Basnage's work, but did not accomplish his design. Three historians, indeed, are named as belonging to this time—the itinerant Rabbi, David Conforte, secondly, Miguel (Daniel) de Barrios, a Marrano, born in Portugal, who returned to Judaism at Amsterdam, and lastly the Polish Rabbi, Jechiel

Heilperin, of Minsk. But all three resemble the monkish chroniclers of the barbarous ages, and their style is more repulsive than attractive.

If literature is the true photograph of the thoughts and aspirations of an age, then the century which lies between Spinoza and Mendelssohn, judged by its literary productions, must have had very ugly features. A good deal, it is true, was written and published; every Rabbi by a fresh contribution to the already stupendous pile of Rabbinical matter essayed to perpetuate his name, to secure his future bliss, and withal to gain something thereby. Subtle Rabbinical commentaries, insipid sermons and books of devotion, senseless controversial writings were the recreations of the Jewish mind or lack of mind at this time. The flower of poetry found no soil in this quagmire. This age produced only two Jewish poets, genuine sons of the Jewish Muse, who were parted by zones from one another, one living in the island of Jamaica and the other in Italy—Lopez Laguna and Luzzato—as if the old Jewish trunk, crownless and leafless, still wished to reveal the life which beat at its heart and to justify its capability of renewing its youth even under the most unfavourable circumstances. Lopez Laguna, born a Marrano in France (about 1660, died after 1720), came when but a youth to Spain, where he made the acquaintance of the horrible Inquisition. In his night of suffering the Psalms, full of tender feeling, brought light and hope to him as to so many of his companions in sorrow. Released from prison and having escaped to Jamaica, Laguna, under the Jewish name of Daniel Israel, struck the chords of his harp to the holy songs which had revived his soul. In order also to make the Psalms accessible to others, especially to the Marranos, who were ignorant of Hebrew, he translated them literally into melodious and elegant Spanish verse. This Psalter, entitled “A Mirror of Life,” Daniel Israel Lopez



Laguna took to London, where his work procured him a triumphant reception from several minor poets and also from three Jewish poetesses, Sarah de Fonseca Pinto y Pimentel, Manuela Nuñez da Almeida and Bienvenida Coen Belmonte, who addressed him in Latin, English, Portuguese and Spanish verses. Moses Chayim Luzzato, who fell a victim to the dreary errors of this time, composed two Hebrew dramas full of beauty and youthful freshness. With the exception of these poetical flowers this long period shows only a colourless waste. Daniel de Barrios, captain, historian and beggar, cannot be reckoned as a poet, although he composed an astonishing number of Spanish, as well as Hebrew rhymes, besides several Spanish dramas, and he sang and begged before nearly every Jewish and Christian magnate who possessed a full purse, seemingly without any sense of shame.

Not only the scientific and artistic spirit, but also the moral sense was lost, or at least blunted in this general demoralisation. The fundamental virtues of the Jewish race continued to exist even at at this time in undiminished strength—idyllic family love, brotherly sympathy towards one another, and purity. Gross vices and crimes occurred even then but seldom in the tents of Jacob. Thoroughly corrupt outcasts were considerate enough to leave them, and to pollute the Church or the Mosque with their immoral behaviour. But the feeling of right and honour amongst the Jews was on the whole weakened; and there was a lowering in tone of that tender conscience, which with a sort of maiden shame, avoids even what the precepts of religion and the paragraphs of the civil code leave unforbidden. Gain and money-making were so imperious a necessity that the way and manner of obtaining it became indifferent and was not exposed to censure. To take undue advantage, and to overreach, not merely the population arrayed in hostility against them, but

even their own co-religionists, was regarded for the most part not as a disgrace, but rather as a kind of heroic action. From this sprang a worship of Mammon, not merely a love of gold, but also respect for it, no matter how impure the source might be from which it sprang. The democratic equality hitherto maintained amongst the Jews, which refused to recognize distinctions of class and caste, was lost in the furious dance round the golden calf. The rich man was held to be worthy of honour—one to whom those less kindly favoured by fortune looked up as to something higher, and in whom they therefore overlooked many failings. The richest men, not the most worthy, came to the head of the management of the community, receiving thereby a charter for arbitrary conduct and arrogance. A satire of the period scourges very severely the almighty power of money, to which all bowed down. "The dollar binds and loses, it raises the ignorant to the chief offices in the community."

The increasing poverty among the Jews was partly the cause of this state of affairs. Only among the small number of Portuguese Jews at Amsterdam, Hamburg, Leghorn, Florence and London were there men of considerable wealth. Isaac (Antonio) Suasso, created Baron Alvernes de Gras by Charles II., of Spain, was able to advance to William III., for his semi-adventurous expedition to London in order to obtain the English crown, two million florins without interest, with the simple words, "If you are fortunate, you will repay them to me; if not, I am willing to lose even that." There were millionaires at Amsterdam—the Pintos, the Belmontes, David Bueno de Mesquito, Franscisco Melo, who rendered many services to the State of Holland by his wealth. De Pinto bequeathed several millions for noble objects, and made provision for the Jewish communities, the State, Christian orphanages, clergy, clerks and sextons. At Hamburg there

were the Texeiras, who were related by marriage to Suasso, and Daniel Abensur, who was able to make large advances to the poor rulers of Poland. On the other hand, the Polish, German, and also the Italian and Oriental Jews, were extremely impoverished. The changes which commerce had experienced brought about this alteration. The Jews could no longer practise usury, they had no capital, or rather Christian capitalists competed with them. Poorest of all were the Polish Jews, —they who used to lord it over the whole of the Jews in Europe. They could not recover from the wounds which the Cossack disturbances had inflicted on them, and the disruption of the Polish kingdom that followed caused them fresh troubles. The increasing poverty of the Polish Jews every year drove swarms of beggars to the west and south of Europe, who found their way to the large communities in order to procure shelter and food from their rich brethren. Polish students of the Talmud went principally to the important seats of the Rabbinate in Prague, Nikolsburg, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, Amsterdam, and Hamburg, and even to Italian communities, being far superior to all other Jews in knowledge of the Talmud. Every Polish emigrant was a Rabbi or preacher, or at least gave himself out for one, and was so regarded. Many of them were a disgrace to the office of Rabbi, to which they had no sort of claim, and no moral holdfast. These men fawned on the rich from need and habit. From them sprang the ever-increasing demoralisation among the Jews. To their care, or rather to their neglect, were entrusted the Jewish youth, who, as soon as they could just talk, were introduced by them to the Talmud, and that too after the artificial and affected method. Through this perversity the language of the German Jews, like that of the Poles, degenerated into a formless stammer, and their manner of thinking and love of disputation



into a crabbed dogmatism that defied all logic. Their feeling for simplicity and truth was also lost, and even the Portuguese Jews, who kept themselves aloof from the odious jargon, did not remain uncontaminated by the perverse manner of thinking which prevailed at the time.

Added to this was the fact that the mud-streams of Sabbatian fanaticism burst forth afresh. They besmirched all who came in contact with them, but, nevertheless, were regarded as a stream of pure water from the fountain-head of the Deity. One good effect, however, was produced, for the stagnant swamp was stirred up and set in motion; or, to speak without metaphor, the sluggish routine in which the Jews lived was broken, and the Rabbis who had become dull with unfruitful learning were roused to a certain degree of passion and energy. After Sabbatai's death one of his followers, Daniel Israel Bonafoux, an ignorant officiating reader (Chazan) at Smyrna, had kept up the faith in the dead Messiah by all sorts of jugglery. At one time he pretended to have seen a moving fire-ball; at another to have heard a voice say that Sabbatai was still alive and would reign for ever. The community at Smyrna, indeed, paid sums of money to the Kadi for his banishment from the city, but Daniel Israel took up his residence in the neighbourhood of Smyrna and encouraged the sect to persevere in their belief. He was aided and abetted by Abraham Michael Cardoso of Tripoli, who reappeared on this stage. Here he found a whole conventicle of Sabbatian associates who flocked round him, because with his scientific education, his culture, and dexterity of speech, he was far superior to them. Cardoso announced dreams and visions, declared himself to be Sabbatai Zevi's successor, the Ephraimite Messiah, practised extraordinary impositions, and visited graves in order to get inspiration through

departed spirits, and to obtain predictions that would suit his views. This consisted in the blasphemous assumption that there are two Gods—one, the First Cause, incomprehensible, without will and influence over the whole universe; the other, the God of Israel, the actual Creator of the world and Lawgiver of the Jewish people, who alone should be worshipped. But the Rabbis of Smyrna put a stop to Cardoso's career, threatened him with death, and compelled him to leave Sabbataï Zevi's birthplace. He betook himself thence to Constantinople, with his Smyrna adherents, pursued his mischievous behaviour further at Adrianople, Rhodosto, in Egypt, the Archipelago and Candia; now as Messiah, now as physician, composed numerous treatises on the advent of the Messianic kingdom, expounded his theosophical-dualistic theory, incurred debts, drew women into his Kabbalistic conventicle, and is said to have lived immorally even to old age. At last Cardoso was stabbed by his nephew, who believed he had been cheated by him (1706). His imposture did not cease with his death; for his writings, a mixture of sense and nonsense, were eagerly read and inflamed men's minds. Abraham Michael Cardoso remained at least faithful to Judaism, did not reverence Sabbataï Zevi as divine, vehemently contended against this blasphemy, and he did not go over to Mahometanism. His prophet, Daniel Israel Bonafoux, on the other hand, assumed the turban, probably on account of the persecution that he suffered at the hands of the Rabbinate of Smyrna.

Far more important was the Kabbalistic fanaticism which proceeded from an itinerant Sabbatian preacher, and was transplanted to Poland, where it found more congenial soil and maintained its ground more tenaciously. Mordecai of Eisenstadt (Mochiach), even after the death of the renegade, remained his faithful follower. This man, a disciple

of Nathan and partisan of Cardoso, who had returned to his home from the East, was of prepossessing appearance and awe-inspiring features; he lived an ascetic life, fasted eleven days in succession, preached in Hungary, Moravia, Bohemia and Italy with much impressiveness concerning penitence and contrition—in fact, played the part of a Jewish Vincent Ferrer. The applause which his preaching excited awakened his confidence, and he gave himself out as a prophet. In word and writing the preacher of Eisenstadt maintained that Sabbataï Zevi was the true Messiah, who had been obliged to become a Mussulman by high mystical dispensation. The Hungarian, Moravian and Bohemian Jews listened to these Sabbatian preachings and prophecies with eager interest. The Sabbatian frenzy had so blunted their power of thought that they were not offended at the notion of a Messiah who had revolted from Judaism. But Mordecai went still further in his folly, gave himself out as the true Messiah of the house of David, and maintained that he was Sabbataï Zevi risen from the dead. The latter had not been able to accomplish the work of redemption, because he was rich. But the Messiah must be poor; therefore he, Mordecai, being poor and persecuted, was the true Redeemer. All these follies were accepted with credulous devotion. Some Italian Jews formally invited the Hungarian Messiah to come to them, and he obeyed this summons. At Modena and Reggio he was received with enthusiasm. He talked of his mission—that he must go to Rome in order to make Messianic preparations in the sinful city. He also cunningly hinted that he might perhaps be obliged to assume a Christian disguise, as Sabbataï Zevi had been obliged to veil himself in Turkish clothing: that is, he might in case of need apparently submit to baptism. However, some Jews



appear to have betrayed his plans to the Roman Inquisition; and therefore his Italian followers advised him to leave Italy. Thus he went once more to Bohemia; but could not find a footing there, and emigrated to Poland. Here, where only a dim rumour of Sabbataï and the Sabbatians had penetrated, he found as it appears, numerous followers; for afterwards a sect was formed there which pursued its licentious career until the beginning of the age of Mendelssohn, and even beyond that period.

At the same time the old imposture reappeared under new forms in Turkey. Sabbataï Zevi had left a widow, the daughter of a man who was deeply versed in the Talmud, by name Joseph Philosoph of Salonica. She is said either from ambition or, as her enemies declared, from licentious motives, to have instigated the Sabbatians through deception to fresh frenzy. Having returned to Salonica, she is said to have passed off her brother, Jacob (surnamed Querido, the beloved), as her own son by Sabbataï Zevi. This boy, who received the name of Jacob Zevi, became an object of devout reverence to the Sabbatians. They believed that in him the united souls of the two Messiahs of the houses of Joseph and David were born again; he was therefore to be regarded as the true Redeemer, as the genuine successor of Sabbataï. This new fantastic idea found the more adherents because Querido's own father, Joseph Philosoph, was a man deeply versed in the Talmud, and another learned Talmudist, Solomon Florentin, associated with the believers and supported the new claimant. The widow of the Messiah and her brother Querido are said straightway to have recommended and practised sexual indulgence as a means of promoting the work of redemption. The sinfulness of the world could only be overcome by a superabundance of sin, by the extremest degree of

licentiousness. In this circle of Salonica, therefore, shameless profligacy and even incest are said to have been openly practised—so their enemies declared. One thing only is certain, that marriage was not regarded as sacred among these people. According to the perverse teachings of the Lurian school of Kabbalists, married women, to whom their husbands were unacceptable, as a hindrance to a harmonious mystical marriage, could be divorced without further ceremony and made over to others, who felt themselves attracted to them. This precept was only too eagerly obeyed in the mystical circle; for it recognised a distinct kind of “elective affinity.” Several hundreds in Salonica belonged to this Sabbatian sect, chiefly young people. Amongst them was a young man, named Solomon Ayllon, who afterwards became a Rabbi of London and Amsterdam; he shared in the prevailing loose views as to continence. He married a wife, as one appointed to him by heaven, whom another man had forsaken without formal divorce, and she was carried off from him by a third. The Sabbatians of Salonica stood in close connexion with other members of the sect in Adrianople and Smyrna.

The Rabbis could not regard this disorder with indifference, and denounced the offenders to the Turkish authorities. The latter instituted investigations and sentenced them to severe punishments. But the Sabbatians had learned from their founder a means of appeasing the anger of the Turkish rulers. They all to the number, it is said, of four hundred, assumed the white turban (about 1687). But they were more in earnest in their newly-adopted Mahometan faith. The pseudo-Messiah Jacob Zevi Querido made a pilgrimage to Mecca, with many of his followers, in order to pray at the tomb of the prophet Mahomet. On the journey back he died at Alexandria. The leadership of the Turco-Jewish sect at Salonica was afterwards undertaken by his

son Berechya, or Barachya (about 1695-1740). He also was regarded as the successor of Sabbataï Zevi, as the embodiment of the original soul of the Messiah, as the incarnate Deity. His followers lived under the name Dolmäh (properly Donmäh), that is, apostates from Judaism, a sect distinct alike from the Jews and Turks, who intermarried only with one another, and attended the mosques now and then, but more frequently assembled in secret for their own mystical service, in order to worship their Redeemer and Man-God. There are still existing in Salonica descendants of the sect of Sabbataï, Querido, Barachya, who observe a mixture of Kabbalistic and Turkish usages. Of Judaism they retained only the rite of circumcision on the eighth day and the Song of Solomon, the love dialogue and monologue of which left them free play for mystical and licentious interpretations. In short, the freedom of their own belief was granted by the Sultan to the Donmäh, who are said to have numbered 4,000 members.

In spite of this disorderly procedure on the part of the Sabbatians of Salonica, which bade defiance alike to Judaism and morality, or perhaps on account of their excesses, they continually found fresh supporters, who clung to the delusion with rigid pertinacity, deceived themselves and others, and gave impostors an opportunity to profit by this fanatical humour. From the East and from Poland secret Sabbatians crossed to and fro, from the latter as itinerant preachers, and from the former as pretended missionaries from the Holy Land, and continually incited to fresh errors. The emissary, Abraham Cuenqui, from Hebron, who in Poland and Germany claimed charity for the poor of that city, gave, at the request of a mystic, a glowing description of the life of Sabbataï, whom he had seen and admired in his youth. This biography, a sort of Sabbatian Gospel, affords the best idea



how in the field of religion history takes the shape of myth, and myth again transforms itself into history. In Poland there arose, probably excited by the crazy Mordecai of Eisenstadt, a Sabbatian sect, which aimed at promoting the advent of the kingdom of heaven by strict penitence. At its head stood two men, Judah Chassid (the pious) of Dubno, a narrow-minded simpleton, and Chayim Malach, a cunning Talmudist. Both began operations by preaching stirring sermons, and found an applauding audience, who imitated them in penances and Kabbalistic extravagances, which they called Chassidism. In Poland, however, the ignorance was so great that the Rabbis themselves did not recognise the mischievous tendency of these Sabbatian enthusiasts. From 1,300 to 1,500 persons of this sect, under Judah Chassid, emigrated from Poland at the beginning of the year 1700, with the resolution of journeying to the Holy Land, in order to await the redemption there. Like the Christian flagellants of old, these so-called devotees distinguished themselves by many days' fasting and mortifications of every kind. They wore on the Sabbath white garments of satin or cloth, whereby they intended to signify the time of grace. Wherever they went through Germany, they preached and exhorted to strict penance. Judah Chassid by his powerful voice, his attitude, and bitter tears, carried away his hearers with him. He wrought especially upon the weak minds of women, to whom he was wont to preach, contrary to custom, with a Torah roll under his arm, in the upper part of the synagogue. While the greater number of the Chassidim were assembling in Moravia and Hungary, Judah Chassid travelled with about 150 persons through Germany from Altona to Frankfort-on-the-Maine and Vienna, everywhere preaching, wailing and warning. The sect, especially in the larger communities, was

richly supported. On account of the concourse of men and women who flocked to these sectarians, the Rabbis did not venture to oppose their proceedings. Samuel Oppenheim, the rich Court Jew at Vienna, supported the Chassidim richly, and procured passports for them to the East.

The enthusiasm of this sect soon came to an end. On the first day after their arrival in Jerusalem their principal leader Judah Chassid died; his followers were helpless, and instead of speedy redemption found only horrible misery. Some of the Chassidim, therefore, from the effects of sudden disappointment and despair, went over to Islam. The rest dispersed in all directions, many were baptised as Christians, amongst them Judah Chassid's nephew, Wolf Levi of Lublin, who took the name of Francis Lothair Philippi; another nephew, Isaiah Chassid, afterwards caused fresh Sabbatian disturbances. Chayim Malach, however, who made the acquaintance of the aged Samuel Primo, Sabbataï Zevi's private secretary and counsellor, remained for several years in Jerusalem, and presided over a small Sabbatian sect. He also taught the doctrine of two Gods or three Gods, and of the Divine incarnation, paid Sabbataï Zevi divine reverence, and is said to have carried about his image (carved in wood) to the synagogue to be worshipped, where his followers are said to have danced round it. Chayim Malach aimed at the destruction of Rabbinical Judaism or Judaism in general. It is incomprehensible how the community of Jerusalem could have witnessed his proceedings for years without opposing them; but probably the Rabbis there likewise paid homage to the Sabbatian idolatry, or profited by it. However, Chayim Malach seems at length to have been banished from Jerusalem. He then betook himself to the Mahometan Sabbatians at Salonica, the Donmäh, took part in their extravagant follies, then

went about preaching in several Turkish communities, and openly taught the Sabbatian imposture. At Constantinople, however, he was excommunicated, and on his second residence in that community was banished by Chacham Bashi (about 1709). He thereupon returned through Germany to Poland, scattering the seed of Sabbatian heresy, which was afterwards destined to undermine Judaism. He is said to have met with his death through intoxication.

At the same time that Malach was sowing the seed-grains in Poland for the process of dissolution, the torch of discord was hurled into the Jewish camp by two disguised Sabbatians, Chayon and Ayllon; and the one through impostures, and the other through conceit and dogmatism, promoted a movement which presents very unpleasant features. Solomon Ayllon (born about 1667, died 1728), was born at Safet of Spanish descent, and had filled his brains with the errors of the Kabbala. In his youth he fell amongst the circle of the Sabbatians of Salonica, and in part shared their extravagances. Later on he went to Leghorn, and after the death of the worthy and accomplished Rabbi, Jacob Abendana, was invited to London to fill his place (1696—1707). Ayllon had enemies in London, who, having heard of his not wholly irreproachable youth, implored one Rabbi after another to procure his dismissal from office. But from dread of the public scandal which would arise should it be known that a former adherent of the notorious Sabbataï had officiated as a Rabbi, all who were consulted advised that the ugly story should be forgotten. Ayllon was not distinguished in any branch of learning, not even in a knowledge of the Talmud, nor had he an over-scrupulous conscience. When in treaty for the post of Rabbi at the College of Amsterdam, and the London community were unwilling to lose him, he swore a



solemn oath that he did not wish to accept the post offered to him, whilst he had already given his consent to the Amsterdam Council, and had even undertaken the office. He palliated his conduct in a sophistical and Jesuitical manner. His youthful predilection for Sabbatian errors, which he does not appear entirely to have abandoned even as Rabbi of Amsterdam, induced Ayllon to give his aid to an arrant rogue, and thereby to help in producing profound dissensions in the Jewish world.

This arch-impostor, who in hypocrisy, audacity and unscrupulousness had but few equals in the eighteenth century, so rich in impostors, was Nehemiah Chiya Chayon (born about 1650, died 1726). He took especial delight in mystification and extravagances, and from his youth up led an adventurous and easy life of dissimulation. The career of this Kabbalistic adventurer is characteristic of the demoralisation of the age in various ways. Chayon received his Talmudical instruction at Hebron, where the Sabbatian intoxication had made many victims. He possessed considerable logical acuteness, was ready at overcoming apparent contradictions and incongruities; but his giddy brain and cold heart, bent on the satisfaction of low cravings, induced him to make a corrupt use of his powers. Of the Talmud and Rabbinical literature he only understood enough to be able to prove himself at home in them, but he had no deep sentiment, nor any feeling of religion. He professed to be observant from hypocrisy; if unwatched, on the other hand, he dispensed with all religion and morality. He could assume a serious, awe-inspiring manner, hold men enthralled by his attractive appearance, his Kabbalistic scraps, and his mysterious demeanour. He generally enacted the part of the saint, but he also sang love-songs and pursued women. He had, as he himself confessed, close relation with the Sabbatians at Salonica;

and he had taken trouble to become familiar with their writings. He also frequently conversed with their leader, Samuel Primo, about Kabbalistic projects. He even pretended to have broached to him the doctrine of a new Trinity in Unity. He composed a work in which he maintained the view that Judaism with a Kabbalistic fore and background inculcated a belief in a triune God. With this manuscript in his otherwise empty coffer he went to Smyrna, in the spring of the year 1708, with the intention of seeking his fortune either with the Sabbatians or with their opponents. He did, in fact, succeed in hoodwinking some rich men of Smyrna. His patrons pledged themselves mutually and also to Chayon to give him powerful support. The arch-rogue was treated at Smyrna as a holy prophet, and nearly the whole of the community escorted him to the ship which was to convey him back to Palestine. His schemes were for the moment crowned with success. But before Chayon could settle down, the Rabbinate of Jerusalem launched a sentence of excommunication against him, condemned his writings, which they had not even read, to be burned (June, 1708), and refused to give a hearing to the author. This gross blunder revenged itself afterwards. For the moment, however, Chayon was defeated. As one who had been formally interdicted by the chief College, he could not continue in Palestine. The enthusiasm of his patrons in Smyrna was extinguished as quickly as it had blazed up, for the favour of men is changeable.

Thus Chayon after a few days of good fortune was again reduced to make journeys. In Italy, whither he had come after leaving Egypt, where he spent some years begging (1709-1711), his schemes met with little sympathy. At Venice only he met with some consideration from the Rabbis and laity. Here he printed a small pamphlet, an extract from his larger writing, wherein he openly set forth

the Trinity as an article of the Jewish faith, though not the Christian Trinity—three Persons (Parzufim) in the Godhead, the holy Primeval One, or Soul of all Souls, the Holy King, or incarnation of Deity, and also a female Person (the Shechinah). This nonsense, which was an insult to Judaism and its conception of God, was repeated by Chayon in bad verses, which he recommended as edifying prayers for the especially pious. Bold and venturesome, he interwove with the first verses the words of a low Italian song, "The Fair Margaret." And this blasphemous pamphlet ("Secret of the Trinity," "Raza di Jechuda") was accepted and recommended by the Rabbinate of Venice, either because they had not seen it before it was printed, or because they did not perceive the drift of it in its Kabbalistic obscurity. Chayon, however, did not stay long at Venice, but betook himself soon after to Prague. Here he found a credulous faith as favourable as he needed for his work of deception. The leaders of the community, older and younger Rabbis and students of the Talmud, were all filled with it.

David Oppenheim, the chief Rabbi of Prague, who was more famous for his rich collection of books than on account of his deeds and literary performances, was an inveterate Kabbalist. He had no leisure indeed to meddle with the itinerant preacher Chayon, nor to trouble himself about the affairs of the community and interests of Judaism. He employed his time in money transactions with the funds which his rich uncle at Vienna, Samuel Oppenheim, had left him, together with a considerable library. David Oppenheim, therefore, seldom met Chayon; but his son Joseph, who was enchanted with his Kabbalistic juggling, took him into his house. He was also well received by the Kabbalistic Rabbi, Naphtali Cohen, who was then living at Prague, and whose dealing



with miracles had cost him very dear. Who would not exert himself for the pretended preacher or missionary from Palestine—as Chayon professed himself to be—if the house of Oppenheim and Naphtali Cohen paid him homage? No wonder that industrious youthful students of the Talmud, thirsting for knowledge, thronged to Chayon! Among these was Jonathan Eibeschutz, who became afterwards the object of so much notoriety, and who was living at the same time at Prague. Chayon preached sermons at Prague, and entranced his hearers by his sophistical and witty manner, which made the most inconsistent things appear reconcilable. Now and then he allowed the erroneous doctrine of the Salonica Sabbatians to peep through, viz., that sin can only be overcome by superabundance of sinfulness, by the satisfaction of all, even the most wicked desires, and by the transgression of the Torah. He imposed upon the believers at Prague, or caused it to be circulated by his followers from Venice, that he conversed with the prophet Elijah, that he could compel the Godhead to reveal itself to him, and that he was able to call the dead to life and to create new worlds—all of which found credence. He wrote amulets, for which men strove eagerly, but at the same time he led in secret a profligate life. The money which he derived from imposture he wasted in card-playing. At last he ventured to submit his heretical writing, his Sabbatian confession of faith about the Trinity, to Naphtali Cohen for his opinion, and showed him forged testimonials of recommendation from Italian Rabbis. From pure admiration for Chayon's person Naphtali Cohen without even having cast a glance at the manuscript, gave him not only a simple acceptance, but a glowing recommendation of it—a careless mode of procedure which was characteristic of the Rabbis generally of that time,

but which on this occasion was destined to revenge itself bitterly.

Provided with forged and filched recommendations, Chayon deceived many other communities, those of Vienna, Nicolsburg, Prosnitz, Breslau, Glogau and Berlin; he succeeded in passing himself off as a prophet before the credulous German Jews, and in being maintained by them. But secretly he entered into close relations with a Sabbatian enthusiast or impostor Löbele Prosnitz, who cut out the four Hebrew letters of the name of God in gold tinsel and stuck it on his breast, and then made it shine before the dazzled eyes of the credulous by means of alcohol and flames of turpentine. Like savages, the Moravian Jews then gazed with astonishment at Löbele Prosnitz's spirit miracle. At Berlin, where Chayon spent several months, he enjoyed the best opportunity of fishing in troubled waters. The community of Berlin, which had already increased to more than a hundred families, had fallen into disunion, apparently through two mutually hostile families about the Court. The widow of the Court jeweller, Liebmann, was a favourite of King Frederick I., and was therefore disliked by the Crown Prince, afterwards Frederick William I. The latter had his own Jew in attendance, Marcus Magnus, the mortal enemy of the house of Liebmann, not merely from complaisance to the successor to the throne. The feud between the two Jewish houses in Berlin spread to the whole community, divided it into two parties and affected even the synagogue. Just when the heat of faction burned most furiously, Chayon came to Berlin and turned the quarrel to his own advantage. He joined the Liebmann party, which though the weaker of the two, was rich, and therefore more willing to make sacrifices. The Rabbi of Berlin at that time, Aaron Benjamin Wolf, son-in-law of the Court Jewess Liebmann, a simple fellow, treated Chayon

with honourable distinction. Naphtali Cohen, who had also come to Berlin, could indeed have unmasked Chayon, but was afraid, as he said, to inflame the quarrel still further. Thus Chayon without molestation was able to print in Berlin his heretical book, with which he had begun his mischievous proceedings five years before at Smyrna. He gave his work the pretentious title, "The Belief of the Universe" ("Mehemenuta de Cola"). The main text, which was the production of a Sabbatian (some thought of Sabbataï Zevi himself), proclaims the "holy king," the Messiah, the incarnate Deity, as the God of Israel and as the exclusive object of reverence and worship. Chayon added thereto two sophistical commentaries, wherein he proved in various ways that the God of Judaism was the Trinity. In the prayer, "Hear, O Israel, God is one," every Jew must needs think of this Trinity in Unity; otherwise he could not attain to salvation, even if he fulfilled all religious and moral duties. This belief alone could make a man certain of bliss. So low had Judaism sunk, that such blasphemy could be printed before the eyes and with the consent of a Rabbi—Aaron Benjamin Wolf, at Berlin — and actually at the expense of the Liebmann party! Chayon had the audacity to order forged testimonials of Rabbis to be prefixed, as though they had read the book and recommended it. With this work he hastened through Hamburg to Amsterdam, to make his fortune in that Jewish Eldorado, and thus a distracting schism commenced in the Jewish world.

The community of Amsterdam had been previously warned of the machinations of the Sabbatians. The Jerusalem Rabbi, Abraham Yizchaki, who had been appointed as an emissary to collect alms, behaved like a papal legate, to whom belongs the supremacy over everything religious, and as a Grand Inquisitor commissioned to destroy the heresy



which had been gaining ground. At Smyrna the heretical writings of the fanatic, Abraham Michael Cardoso, were in the hands of a few secret Sabbatians. At Yizchaki's suggestion these had to be given up by their owners under threat of excommunication and severe temporal punishment, and they were burned. The community of Smyrna thereby felt itself freed from a heavy burden, and was thankful to its liberator. Yizchaki had also come to Amsterdam, and had warned the Rabbis and presidencies against Sabbatian emissaries, and drew attention to the hint of the Smyrna Rabbinate, that a secret Sabbatian was on his way to print Cardoso's writings. In fact, a Sabbatian emissary did come to Amsterdam. Chayon at first conducted himself modestly towards the Portuguese, and presented the Council with a copy of his work on the Trinity which had been printed at Berlin, in order to obtain leave to sell it. He appears to have passed himself off as an emissary from Palestine. Hereupon bickerings arose, which began with personal feeling and ended in wide-spread dissension.

The Rabbi of the German community, Zevi Ashkenasi, called Chacham Zevi, was much excited at the news of Chayon's presence at Amsterdam. This man, whose father had belonged to the most zealous Sabbatians, while he himself and his son, Jacob Emden, were destined to fight against them with vehement zeal, was gifted with a clear head, and combined solidity with acuteness in the study of the Talmud. In his eighteenth year he had been consulted as a ripe expert in the Talmud. Pampered, sought after, married while young to the daughter of a rich man at Buda and thereby rendered independent, he developed a feeling of proud self-consciousness and also a certain vanity based on his knowledge of the Talmud. On account of his Talmudical learning

he was invited to be chief Rabbi of the German community (1710); he preferred, however, to be called Chacham. Here he looked down with great contempt upon his Portuguese colleagues, especially upon Solomon Ayllon, and would never regard him as his equal in rank. "Chacham Zevi wishes to rank higher even than the prophet Moses," was the judgment passed upon him by Ayllon.

As soon as the name of Chayon reached the ears of the German Chacham, he recognised in him his former enemy of Bosna-Seraï in Bosnia, where Zevi had been Rabbi for a short time, and he immediately intimated to the Portuguese authorities that it would be wise to show no sort of favour to the stranger, as he was a man of evil notoriety. Nehemiah Chayon, however, explained that the mistake in his identity had been caused by a similarity of name, and behaved himself so very humbly towards Chacham Zevi, that the latter soon declared to the Council that he had nothing to urge against the stranger who was not the man he had denounced. Chayon now appeared to have found a free career at Amsterdam, when Moses Chages of Jerusalem, who was in Holland, sounded the alarm against him, perhaps because he feared that he might find in him a rival exponent of the claims of Jerusalem. At any rate the heretical work printed at Berlin was put before him for examination, as some members of the Council did not trust their Chacham Ayllon. Scarcely had he looked into it, when he raised the cry of heresy. In fact, it did not need a lengthy search in the book to find an explicit enunciation of the doctrine of the Trinity. The German Chacham, having had his attention drawn by Moses Chages to Chayon's suspicious doctrine, again notified it to the Portuguese Council, and insisted that instead of favouring the stranger, they should banish him. The Council, however, did not like to issue orders so abruptly, and re-

quested Chacham Zevi either to point out to them the heretical passages in Chayon's book, or to join with some members nominated by the Council as a committee to examine it. Chacham Zevi, at the advice of Chages rejected both proposals flatly, saying that as Rabbi he was not obliged to bring forward proofs, but simply to pronounce a final judgment. Still less did he choose to take counsel with Ayllon, as this would have been tantamount to recognising him as a Talmudist of equal rank with himself. This haughty behaviour of the Chacham, on the one hand, and Ayllon's sensitiveness on the other, kindled the spark into a bright flame.

The Portuguese Chacham had reason to feel himself slighted and to complain. His own congregation had passed him over in this matter, showed distrust towards him, and, to a certain extent, set his opponent up as a higher authority over him. Besides, he appears to have feared the serpent-like adventurer, who if persecuted might reveal more of Ayllon's past history and relations to the Salonica heretics than was desirable. He accordingly felt it his interest to remain on Chayon's side and protect him against the threatened banishment from Amsterdam. It was not difficult for him to prejudice a member of the Portuguese presidency, Aaron de Pinto, a resolute, unbending, hard man, indifferent to subtle problems, against the German Chacham, to persuade him that it was his duty to guard the independence of the old, respectable and superior Portuguese community, against the presumption of the hitherto subordinate German one; in fact, Ayllon converted the important question of orthodoxy and heresy into one of precedence between the various communities. De Pinto treated the affair in this light, and the other members of the Council conformed to his resolute will. He straightway rejected any interference of the German Chacham in an affair,



which apparently alone concerned the Portuguese community, broke off all negotiations with him, and commissioned Ayllon to appoint a committee of Portuguese to examine and report on Chayon's work. Ayllon added to the college of Rabbis four men, of whom only one understood anything of this question, and hesitated at first to join the committee until compelled to do so. The others, on the other hand, were totally ignorant of theology and accordingly dependent on Ayllon's judgment. The Council—that is, Pinto, in conjunction with Ayllon, made the members of the committee swear that no one should see the copies of Chayon's work handed over to them for examination, and, above all, that everything should be kept secret until the final judgment was pronounced. The petty question of tolerating or expelling a begging adventurer thus attained great importance.

Whilst the Portuguese committee were still apparently engaged in the business of examination, Chacham Zevi, in conjunction with Moses Chages, hastened to pronounce sentence of excommunication against Chayon and his heretical book, because "he sought to draw Israel away from his God and to introduce strange gods (the Trinity)." No one was to have dealings with the author until he should recant his error; and his writings in any case were to be committed to the flames. This sentence of condemnation was printed in Hebrew and Portuguese, and circulated as a pamphlet. A great portion of the objections raised by these two zealots against Chayon's writings, was equally applicable to the Zohar and other Kabbalistic books; but, short-sighted as they were, they saw only the evil consequences of the Kabbalistic errors, not their original cause.

Great was the excitement of the Jews of Amsterdam at this step. Chacham Zevi and Moses Chages were affronted and insulted in the streets by Portu-

guese Jews, and it was asserted that Ayllon employed disreputable people for this purpose. The rabble shouted to one another when they saw Chages, "Stone him, slay him." Attempts at reconciliation failed; partly through the dogmatism of Ayllon, who objected to admit himself wrong, partly through the firmness of De Pinto, who simply had in view the dignity of the Portuguese community. Pamphlets increased the bitter feeling.

The strife among the Jews of Amsterdam made a great stir elsewhere, and was the cause of party strife. Ayllon and De Pinto therefore forbade the members of their community, under threat of excommunication, to read pamphlets, or to express themselves either verbally or in writing upon the matter. They also hastened to issue their judgment, which however was drawn up by Ayllon alone. It declared, in direct opposition to the decision of Chacham Zevi and Chages, that Chayon's work taught nothing offensive or dangerous to Judaism; it contained only the same doctrines as were found in other Kabbalistic writings. Thus it was officially made known in the synagogues (14th August, 1713) that Chayon was acquitted of the charge of heresy brought against him, and was an innocently persecuted man. The day after, the original cause of the strife was carried in triumph into the Portuguese chief synagogue, and was there almost worshipped, to the disgust of his opponents. The false prophet, who had openly declared, "Come, let us worship false gods," was loaded with homage by the Portuguese, who had staked life and property for the unity of God. They shouted huzzah to Chayon in the synagogue and cried, "Down with his adversaries." Chayon must have secretly laughed at the complications which he had caused, and most of all at the credulity of the multitude. De Pinto took care that Chacham Zevi should not be supported by his own German com-

munity, but should even be left without protection to the rough treatment of his opponents. He found himself entirely isolated, almost like a person under interdict.

But help from without came to Chacham Zevi. Those Rabbis, whose pretended letters of recommendation Chayon had prefixed to his work, declared them to be forged. The deepest impression was made by the letters of the highly respected and aged Rabbi of Mantua, Leon Brieli, who, well acquainted with the past history of the impostor, unmasked him and expressed his approval of the sentence of condemnation pronounced against his heretical book. Brieli wrote urgently to the Amsterdam presidency, and to Ayllon, in Hebrew and Italian, imploring them not to lend their authority to so bad a cause. But they remained stubborn and answered him politely yet evasively. Meanwhile the quarrel rose higher every day in the Amsterdam community; every one took one side or the other, defending his view with bitterness, passion, and frequently with vigorous action. Peace vanished from this pattern community and the dissensions were carried into family life. Matters had gone so far that the leaders on each side could no longer yield. But Ayllon and De Pinto went to greater lengths in their obstinacy. They suggested that the Portuguese presidency should summon Chacham Zevi, the Rabbi of the German community (over whom they had no authority whatever), before their tribunal, with the intention of shaming him or of inducing him to recant. When he paid no heed they laid him and Moses Chages under the ban, most strictly forbidding the members of the community to have dealings with them, to take them under protection, or to say a favourable word for them with the civic authorities.

As though the Council and Rabbinate had become infected by Chayon's degraded ideas, they



committed one meanness after another. In justification of their course of action before the public they distorted the actual state of the case and freely made use of notorious falsehoods. They encouraged, or at least countenanced, Chayon in calumniating his opponents with the vilest and most revolting aspersions, not only Chacham Zevi and Chages, but even the wise and venerable Rabbi, Leon Brieli, and supported Chayon in all his audacities. The Portuguese Council and Rabbinate, or rather De Pinto and Ayllon, for their colleagues were mere puppets, persecuted Chayon's opponents as though they were lost to all feeling of right. With Moses Chages they had an easy game. He lived on the Portuguese community; and when they withdrew the means of sustenance, he was compelled to leave Amsterdam with his helpless family and to migrate to Altona. But they pressed Chacham Zevi hard, persecuted him, accused him before the civil authorities, and prevented any one assisting him. Thus it came about that he left Amsterdam, either because De Pinto had procured his banishment at the hands of the magistrates, or because Chacham Zevi, in order to anticipate a scandalous expulsion, went into banishment of his own accord. He repaired to London, in the first instance, then by way of Breslau to Poland, and was everywhere honourably received and welcomed.

Meanwhile his opponents, Chayon, Ayllon and De Pinto were not able to enjoy the fruits of their victory. The apparently trivial dispute assumed large dimensions. Almost all the German, Italian, Polish, and even some African communities with their Rabbis espoused the cause of the persecuted Chacham Zevi, and hurled sentences of excommunication upon the unscrupulous heretic. These anathemas were gradually published, and unsparingly revealed Chayon's villainy, bringing to light

the sentence which had been passed upon him years before at Jerusalem. This exposure through witnesses who came from countries where his past history was well known, contributed to ruin the false prophet of the new Trinity.

But the Portuguese of Amsterdam, or at least their leaders, would not allow him to fall, either because they believed in his audacious lies, or from a sense of shame and obstinacy. They saw clearly, however, that Chayon must take some steps to conjure away the storm which had been raised against him. They therefore favoured his journey to the East, providing him with money and recommendations to influential Jews and Christians, who would support him, and thus avert the sentence passed upon him in the Turkish capital. But the journey proved to be full of thorns for Chayon; no Jew admitted him into his house or gave him entertainment. Like Cain, he was obliged to flee from place to place throughout Europe, laden with curses. At last he had to take ship in haste to Constantinople. He was followed by fresh accusations of heresy, not only from Chages and Naphtali Cohen, but also from the highly esteemed Kabbalist, Joseph Ergas, and the London preacher, David Nieto, who calmly expounded in Hebrew and Spanish the heresy, falsehood and villainy of this hypocritical Sabbatian.

At Constantinople Chayon was avoided by the Jews and treated as an outcast; but his letters of recommendation from Amsterdam paved the way for him with a vizir, who ordered the Jewish agents to accord him support. In spite of his artifices, however, the Rabbinate of Constantinople refused to remove the sentence against him, but referred him to the College of Jerusalem, by which he had first been proscribed. Several years elapsed before three Rabbis, probably intimidated by the vizir, were prepared to free Chayon from the ban, but they added the condition that he should

never again express himself on Kabbalistic points by teaching, preaching or publishing; and Chayon bound himself by a solemn oath—which, however, he broke at the first opportunity. With a letter, which testified to his re-admission into the Jewish communion, he hastened to Europe for fresh adventures and impostures.

Meanwhile the Sabbatian intoxication had spread in Poland, especially in Podolia and the district of Lemberg. There are startling evidences extant of the proceedings of the Podolian Sabbatians: how they wallowed in the pool of shameless profligacy, under the pious pretence of redeeming the world. Their transgressions and contempt of Talmudical Judaism were for a long time kept secret, and they strove to win adherents, preaching and explaining the Zohar so as to cover their immoral theories. As their sect grew they raised the pious mask a little, came out in bolder colours, and were solemnly excommunicated by the Lemberg Rabbinate with extinguished tapers in the synagogue. But this sect could not be suppressed by such means. Its members were inspired with a fanatical desire to scorn the Talmud, the breath of life of the Polish Jews, and to set up in its place, the Kabbala with the Zohar its own Bible, and this plan they endeavoured to put into execution.

Their leaders secretly sent (1725) an emissary in the person of Moses Meir Kamenker into Moravia, Bohemia and Germany, to place them in connexion with the Sabbatians of these countries, and perhaps also in order to beg for money for their joint undertaking. Kamenker travelled through several communities without being found out. Who could see in this begging Polish Rabbi, who understood how to dispute in the manner of the Talmud, and who rolled his eyes in a pious, hypocritical manner, the thoughts which he cherished in his heart? Moses Meir also entered into close connexion with Jonathan



Eibeschutz at Prague, who though still young, was regarded as a most thorough and acute Talmudist, but who became entangled in the snares of the Sabbatian Kabbala. Moses Meir pressed on to Mannheim unrecognised, where a secret Sabbatian of Judah Chassid's following, passed himself off among his companions as the newly-born Messiah. From Mannheim these two Polish Sabbatians threw out their nets, and deluded the simple with sounding phrases from the Zohar. Their main doctrine was, that Jews devoted to the Talmud had not the right faith, which was rooted only in the Kabbala. From Prague at the same time a writing, apparently Kabbalistic, was disseminated, which could scarcely find its equal in absurdity, perversity and blasphemy; the coarsest notions being brought into connexion with the Godhead in Talmudic and Zoharistic forms of expression. This work also develops the doctrine of the persons in the Godhead—the Primeval one and the God of Israel, and hints that from a higher standpoint the Torah and the laws have no significance. It was reported at the time that Jonathan Eibeschutz was the author of this revolting but insipid production.

Chance brought these underhand proceedings to light. Moses Meir was enticed to Frankfort by promises, and in the house of the Rabbi Jacob Kahana, his conduct was exposed. Many heretical writings were found upon him as well as letters of Sabbatians, amongst which were letters both from and to Eibeschutz. Upon this an examination of witnesses was held by three Rabbis (July, 1725). Several witnesses denounced Moses Meir, Isaiah Chassid and Löbele Prosnitz as closely connected fanatical Sabbatians, to which body Eibeschutz also belonged. These three indeed regarded him as Sabbataï's successor, and as the genuine Messiah. The witnesses averred that they had received Kabbalistic heretical writings about the Song of

Solomon, and others from Moses Meïr. They pretended also to have heard many blasphemies that could not be pronounced with the lips. Because of the writings found upon Moses Meïr Kamenker and the testimony of witnesses, the Rabbinate of Frankfort pronounced upon him, his companions, and all the Sabbatians the severest possible sentence, decreeing that no one should have dealings with them in any form whatever, and that every Jew should be bound to inform the Rabbis of the secret Sabbatians, and reveal their misconduct without respect of persons. The Rabbis of the German communities of Altona-Hamburg and Amsterdam joined in this sentence; they ordered the form of excommunication to be read aloud in the synagogues for the information of all, and also had the decision printed. The same thing was done at Frankfurt-on-the-Oder at fair-time in presence of many foreign Jews, and several Polish Rabbis did the same. They had come to see at last that only by united forces, and continuous efforts, could an end be put to the follies of the Sabbatians.

Just at this time Chayon had returned to Europe and had been spreading his imposture. In order to protect himself from persecution, he secretly approached the Christians, obtained access to the Kaiserburg at Vienna, withdrew himself from the Jews, reviled them as blind men who rejected the true faith; gave it to be understood that he too taught the doctrine of the Trinity, and that he could bring over the Jews. Provided with a letter of protection from the Court, he proceeded on his journey from Vienna and again played his double game, secretly as a Sabbatian and openly as an orthodox Jew who had been released from the interdict. It is hardly credible, as contemporaries relate of Chayon, that at the age of nearly eighty, he took about with him as his wife a notorious prostitute, whom he had picked up in Hungary.

However, he did not meet with so good a reception this time; distrust was excited against the secret Sabbatians and especially against him. At Prague he was not admitted into the city. At Berlin, Chayon wrote to a former acquaintance that, if his travelling expenses were not sent to him, he was resolved to be baptised to the disgrace of the Jews. At Hanover, his papers were taken from him, which exposed him still more. Thus the poor rogue dragged himself to Amsterdam in the hope of again finding enthusiastic friends. But Ayllon, who was still alive, would have nothing more to do with him; he is said to have repented having ever favoured Chayon, and the latter was included in the prescriptions against the Sabbatians and excommunicated (1726). Moses Chages, who had formerly been persecuted by him and had been despised whilst living in Altona, was considered to some extent as the head judge of the heretics, and now gave him the last blow. Chayon could not assert himself in Europe and in the East, and therefore repaired to North Africa, where he died. His son was converted to Christianity, and, whilst at Rome, through his false, or half-true accusations, he drew down the attention of the Inquisition on ancient Jewish literature, which he declared to be inimical to Christianity.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE AGE OF LUZZATTO, EIBESCHÜTZ AND FRANK.

Poetical Works of Moses Chayim Luzzatto—Luzzatto ensnared in the Kabbala—His contest with Rabbinical authorities—Luzzatto's last drama—Jonathan Eibeschutz—Character and Education of Eibeschutz—His relations with the Jesuits in Prague—The Austrian War of Succession—Expulsion of the Jews from Prague—Eibeschutz becomes Rabbi of Altona—Jacob Emden—Eibeschutz charged with heresy—The Controversy between Emden and Eibeschutz—The Amulets—Party strife—Interference by Christians and the Civil Authorities—Revival of Sabbatianism—Jacob Frank Lebkowicz and the Frankists—The doctrine of the Trinity—Excesses of the Frankists.

1727—1760 C.E.

THE numerous exposures and the confusion caused by visionaries and impostors throughout almost an entire century, the lamentable effects of the careers of Sabbataï Zevi and his band of prophets—Cardoso, Mordecai of Eisenstadt, Querido, Judah Chassid, Chayim Malach, Chayon and others—failed altogether to suppress once and for all the Kabbalistic and Messianic extravagances. As yet these impostors only met with fresh imitators, who found a credulous circle ready to believe in them, and thus new disorders were begotten. The unhealthy humours which, during the lapse of ages were introduced into the organism of Judaism reappeared like hideous eruptions on the surface, but these might be considered as the signs of a return to convalescence. This wide-spread corruption had already affected the sound members. A gifted youth, endowed by nature with splendid talents, who in ordinary circumstances would have become an ornament to Judaism, was carried away by the

general extravagance of thought, and, through caprice, misapplied his excellent gifts, and of his own free will contributed to error. It is impossible to resist a feeling of sorrow at finding this amiable man with his almost perfect character falling into errors which bring him down to the level of those impure spirits, Chayon and Löbele Prosnitz — a many-coloured sunbeam illuminating a swamp. If we denounce the Kabbala, which has begotten such unspeakable misconceptions as to Judaism, and justly feel wrath alike against its authors and propagators, we feel specially moved to anger when we find two noble young men of high endowments and purity of life, Solomon Molcho and Luzzatto, following its chimeras, and being thereby precipitated into the abyss. Both literally sacrificed their lives for dreams, the confused imagery of which was suggested to them by the astounding medley of the Kabbala. Although Luzzatto did not meet with a tragic end on the funeral pile like the Portuguese Marrano who shared his convictions, yet he too shed his blood freely, though from wounds which he had inflicted on himself under the influence of excitement.

Moses Chayim Luzzatto (born 1707, died 1747) was the son of very wealthy parents, natives of Padua. His father, who carried on an extensive silk business, spared no expense in educating him. The two ancient languages, Hebrew and Latin, which in Italy were in some measure a literary necessity, the one as regarded the Jews and the other with respect to the Christians, Luzzatto acquired in early youth; but they had an influence on his mind altogether different from that which they obtained over his contemporaries. Both enriched and promoted the higher development of his genius. Latin opened for him the realm of the beautiful, Hebrew the gates of the sublime. Luzzatto had a poet's delicately-strung soul, which reproduced

every breath of the air in harmonious, tuneful vibrations like an Æolian harp. His poetic gift displayed at once power and sweetness, wealth of fancy and richness of imagery, combined with due sense of proportion. A believer in the transmigration of souls might have said, without presumption, that the soul of the Hebrew-Castilian singer, Jehuda Halevi, had been born again in Luzzatto, but had become more perfect, more matured, more tender, and endowed with a more delicate sense of harmony, because he was so to speak encompassed by the musical atmosphere of his Italian fatherland. Even in early boyhood every event, joyful or sad, was to him a complete picture, a small work of art, wherein colour and euphony were revealed together. When a youth of seventeen he discerned with such remarkable clearness the hidden charm of language, the laws of harmony which are of as much importance in the higher forms of oratory as in poetry, and the grace of rhythm and cadence, that he composed a work on the subject, and illustrated it by beautiful examples from sacred poetry. He contemplated introducing a new metre into modern Hebrew poetry, in order to obtain a greater variety of long and short syllables, and thus to produce a musical cadence. The Hebrew language is usually assigned to the dead tongues. To Luzzatto, however, it was full of life, vigour and youth, clear and euphonious. He used Hebrew as a pliant instrument, and drew from it sweet notes and stirring melodies; he renewed its youth, invested it with a peculiar charm, and, in short, infused into it the rich tones of Isaiah's eloquence which his sympathetic ear had absorbed. Incomparably more gifted than Joseph Penso de la Vega, Luzzatto, in his seventeenth year, composed a drama on the Biblical theme of Samson and the Philistines. This early work already gives promise of the finished author of the future; the versification is faultless, the thoughts original, and



the language free from bombast and redundancy. His Hebrew prose, too, is an agreeable contrast to the insipid, ornate and laboriously witty style of his Jewish contemporaries; it has much of the simplicity, polish and vivacity of the Biblical narrative. Before he had attained his twentieth year Luzzatto had composed one hundred and fifty hymns, which are indeed only an imitation of the old psalter, but the language of which is marked by fervour and purity. It was perhaps during the same period that he composed his second Hebrew drama, in four acts—The High Tower, or the Innocence of the Virtuous—which is beautiful in its versification and in melodious language, but is poor in thought. The young poet had not yet seen life in its fulness, nor keenly studied its contrasts and struggles. He realised nothing beyond idyllic family life and the restful school. Even virtue and vice, love and selfishness which he desired to represent in his drama were known to him but by hearsay. His muse becomes eloquent only when she sings of God's sublimity. Isolated verses are faultless, but the work as a whole is that of a schoolboy. He was at this time far too dependent on Italian models, and still walked on stilts.

This facility and versatility in clothing original and impressive thoughts in peculiar and striking forms, and the over-abundance of his half-matured ideas, which, if he could have perfected them, might have proved a blessing to Judaism and to himself, were transformed into a curse. One day (Sivan, 1727), he was seized with the desire of imitating the mystic language of the Zohar, and he succeeded equally well as had been the case with the psalms, in making sentences and expressions deceptively similar to those of the Zohar, just as high-sounding, apparently full of meaning, and in reality meaningless. This success turned his head, and led him on a wrong path. Instead of perceiving that if the Kabbalistic style characteristic

of the Zohar were capable of imitation, that book must be the work merely of a clever human author, Luzzatto perversely inferred that his own creative faculty did not proceed from natural endowments, but, as in the case of the Zohar, might be the product of a higher inspiration. He shared, in fact, the mistaken views of his age with respect to the origin and value of the Kabbala. Isaiah Bassan, of Padua—who instructed Luzzatto in his early years—had infused mystical poison into his healthy blood. Any other teacher, however, would also have led him into the errors of the Kabbala, from which there was indeed no escape. The air of the Ghettos was impregnated with Kabbala. From his youth upwards Luzzatto had heard daily that great adepts in mysticism possessed special tutelar spirits (Maggid) who every day gave them manifestations from above. Why should not he, too, be vouchsafed this divine gift of grace? Some of the mystical writings of Lurya, at that time still a rarity, fell into his hands. He learnt them by heart, became entirely absorbed in them, and thus completed his derangement. Luzzatto was possessed by a peculiar delusion. His naturally clear and methodical intellect, his fine sense of the simplicity and beauty of the poetry of the Bible, and his æsthetic conceptions with regard to Italian and Latin literature compelled him, even amidst the chaos of the Kabbala (the divine origin of which was firmly impressed on him), to strive after clearness and common-sense. He in no way resembled the wild visionaries—Moses Zacut and Mordecai of Eisenstadt; he did not content himself with idle forms and flourishes, but sought for sound and intrinsic sense. This, however, he found rather in his own mind than in the Zohar or in the writings of Lurya. Nevertheless, he lived under the delusion that a divine spirit had vouchsafed him a deep insight into the Kabbala, solved its

riddles, and disentangled its meshes. Self-deception was the cause of his errors, and his religious fervour, instead of protecting, only plunged him in more deeply. His errors were fostered by the conviction that existing Judaism with its excrescences would be unintelligible without the Kabbala—the theories of which could alone explain the phenomenon of strife and contradictions in the world, and alone satisfactorily justify the tragical history of the Jewish people. Israel—God's people—the noblest portion of creation, remained enfeebled and abased on the lowest rung of the ladder of nations; its religion was misjudged, its struggles fruitless. In order to account for these strange and bewildering facts, Luzzatto constructed a system composed of cobwebs.

It flattered the vanity of this young man of twenty to gain as he imagined, an insight into the relations of the upper and the lower worlds—to explain them in the mystical language of the Zohar, and thus become an important member in the series of created beings. Having firmly convinced himself of the truth of the Kabbala as a fundamental idea, he accepted in addition all its excrescences—the transmigration of souls, the construction of anagrams, and necromancy. He wrote whole volumes filled with Kabbalistic chimeras, and composed a second Zohar (Zohar Tinyana) with appropriate introductions (Tikkunim) and appendices. The more facility he acquired in this form of work, the stronger became his delusion that he too was inspired by a great spirit, and was, if not a more perfect, yet a second Simon bar Yochai. Little by little there crept over him in his solitude, the fantastic conviction that he was the pre-ordained Messiah, called—by means of the second Zohar—to redeem the souls of Israel and of the whole world.

Luzzatto did not long hide his light under a



bushel, but began operations by disclosing to two young men of the same way of thinking as himself, Israel Marini and Israel Treves, that he had received an intimation from his guardian spirit bidding him grant them a view of his new Zohar. His disciples in the Kabbala were dazzled and delighted by the favour thus shown them, and could not keep the secret. The result was that some Venetian Kabbalists sought out the young and wealthy prodigy at his home in Padua, and thus confirmed him still more in his fanaticism. A vivacious, energetic, impetuous Pole, Yekutiel (Kussiel) of Wilna, who had come to Padua to study medicine, enrolled himself among the disciples of Luzzatto. To hear of the latter, join him, abandon his former studies and devote himself to mysticism was for the Pole a rapid and easy resolution. It was far harder for him to keep the secret. No sooner had he been initiated by Luzzatto than he blazoned forth this new and miraculous phenomenon to the world. Kussiel circulated extravagant letters on the subject, which came into the hands of Moses Chages in Altona. The latter, who had stoutly opposed and effectually silenced Chayon and the other Sabbatian visionaries, possessed a certain authority as the recognised official zealot, whose utterances were decisive on matters of faith; and the Rabbi of the so-called "three communities" of Altona, Hamburg, and Wandsbeck, Ezekiel Katzenellenbogen, who had also excommunicated Moses Meir Kamenker and his confederates, was subservient to him. Chages therefore requested the Venetian community effectually to suppress the newly-born brood of heretics before the poison of their doctrine could spread any further.

The Venetian community, however, was not disposed to denounce Luzzatto as a heretic so curtly, but treated him with great forbearance, probably out of consideration for his youth and

talents and the wealth of his family, and was content to order him to justify himself. The enthusiastic youth was put on his mettle by this demand, proudly gave Chages to understand that he did not recognise his authority, repudiated for himself the suspicion of Sabbatian heresy, and asserted in conclusion that he had been vouchsafed revelations from Heaven. He appealed to his instructor, Bassan, who would never refuse to testify that his orthodoxy was above suspicion. In this Luzzatto was perfectly right. Bassan was so infatuated with regard to his pupil that he would have palliated his most scandalous faults, and for that reason he rather encouraged than checked his extravagances. In vain did Chages and Katzenellenbogen threaten him and the Paduan community with the severest form of excommunication if he did not abandon his pretensions to second sight and mystical powers. Luzzatto remained unmoved: God had chosen him, like many before him, that He might reveal to him His mysteries. The other Italian Rabbis showed themselves as lukewarm in the matter as those of Padua and Venice. Moses Chages summoned three Rabbis to form a tribunal, but all three declined to interfere in any way. He exerted himself so zealously, however, that he persuaded several German Rabbis to pass a resolution (June, 1730) in favour of excommunicating all who should compose works in the language of the Zohar, or in the names of angels or saints. This threat proved effectual. Isaiah Bassan was obliged to repair to Padua and obtain a promise from his favourite pupil that he would discontinue his mystical writings and his instruction of young Kabbalists, or exile himself to the Holy Land. At length, too, the Venetian Rabbinate was stirred up to intervene, and sent three representatives to Padua—Jacob Belillos, Moses Menachem Merari, and Nehemiah Vital Cohen,—in whose

presence Luzzatto was obliged to repeat and confirm this declaration as binding. He was also compelled to deliver his Kabbalistic writings to his teacher, Bassan, and they were placed under seal. Thus the storm which had threatened him was for a time averted.

Luzzatto appears to have been sobered by these events. He occupied himself with his business, wrote more poetry, and at length resolved to marry. He was a happy father, lived in concord with his parents and brothers and sisters, and was highly respected. The Evil Spirit however to whom he had bound himself would not release him, and led him back once more to his youthful follies. A quarrel in the family and business misfortunes in connection with his father's house, in which he was a partner, appear to have been the cause of this renewal of his former studies. Disquieted and troubled in the present he sought to learn the future by means of Kabbalistic arts. He began once more to write down his mystical fancies, and ventured even to show them Bassan, from whom he obtained permission to publish them. It was whispered that Luzzatto performed incantations by means of magic; and that his teacher had handed him for publication the sealed writings in his custody. The Venetian Council of Rabbis, owing to certain reports, was especially excited and prejudiced against him. Luzzatto had written a sharp reply in answer to Leon Modena's unanswerable work against the Kabbala; and as the latter was a Venetian Rabbi, though a man of insincere views, the members of the Venetian Council, Samuel Aboab and his five colleagues, considered any attack upon him as an insult to their own honour. Their *esprit de corps* roused them to greater activity than had their zeal for their faith, which was seemingly in peril. Like true Venetians, they had in their service a spy, Salman of Lemberg,



who watched and reported all Luzzatto's movements to them. As long as he was prosperous and surrounded by friends the Venetian Rabbis treated his proceedings with remarkable indulgence and bestowed on him a title of honour; but after his family fell into misfortune, when he was on the verge of ruin and deserted by his friends and flatterers, their regard for him ceased, and they could not find enough stones to throw at him. They gave full credit to one of their number who asserted that he had found implements of magic in Luzzatto's house. Absurdly enough too, they made it a reproach to Luzzatto that he had learnt Latin; to a man who had studied this language of Satan no angel they said could appear! The members of the Venetian Council of Rabbis believed, or pretended to believe—possibly Luzzatto had uttered the boast—that his psalms would take the place of the psalter of David in the Messianic age of the future. They now showed themselves as active as they had previously been negligent in their persecution of the unfortunate author. They sent three inquisitors to Padua to examine him, to search his house for his writings, and to make him declare on oath that he had concealed nothing which he would not have submitted to the censorship of the Venetian Council of Rabbis. In reply to these demands the poet, deeply mortified, haughtily answered: “that this Council had no authority whatever over him as a member of the community of Padua.” The Venetian Rabbis then excommunicated him and condemned his writings to the flames (Dec., 1734), taking care to give notice of their proceedings to all the communities in Germany, and particularly to the “big drum,” Chages. The Paduan community now also abandoned the unfortunate Luzzatto; but to the honour of his teacher, Isaiah Bassan, be it said, that he adhered to him as staunchly in misfortune as formerly during Luzzatto's prosperity.

The Rabbi Katzenellenbogen, or rather his mouth-piece, Chages, took this opportunity of making the sensible suggestion that the study of the Kabbala should be altogether forbidden to young men, in order to prevent their falling into deplorable errors, as had hitherto been the case; but the proposition failed to meet with the approbation of other Rabbis. Twenty years later the evils produced through the Kabbala became so patent that the Synod of Polish Jews enacted a decree to the above effect without encountering any opposition.

The unfortunate dreamer, now banished, was obliged to leave his parents, his wife and child, and go forth as a wanderer; but what grieved him even more was his separation from his comrades of the Kabbala and his mystic conventicle. He cherished the hope of being able to print his Kabbalistic writings in Amsterdam. Alas for his want of experience! Who would help him now, after fortune had turned her back on him! At Frankfort-on-the-Maine he was rudely awakened from his pleasant dream. As soon as the Rabbi, Jacob Kahana, heard of his arrival he insisted that he should promise on oath to abandon his Kabbalistic illusions, and to refrain from writing on or instructing any one in the doctrines of the Zohar (Jan. 12th, 1735). One liberty, however, Luzzatto had reserved for himself; that at the age of forty years he should be permitted to pursue his favourite studies in the Holy Land. Many Rabbis of Germany, Poland, Holland, and Denmark, who were informed of Luzzatto's confession, agreed in advance to his excommunication in case he should break his word. The name of Chages was of course one of those upon the list.

Deeply humiliated and disappointed in his hope, Luzzatto repaired to Amsterdam. Here a gleam of sunlight smiled on him again. The Portuguese community received him kindly, as though

desirous of atoning to him for the injustice he had experienced at the hands of the Germans and Poles. They granted him a pension; and he found a hospitable home in the house of Moses de Chaves, a wealthy Portuguese, and became instructor to his son. In order, however, like Spinoza, to be independent, he applied himself to the work of grinding optical glasses, and this led him also to study physics and mathematics. He now found himself so comfortably settled that he not only induced his wife, but also his parents to come to Amsterdam, and they were well received by the Portuguese community. But this favourable turn in his fortunes encouraged him once more to resume his chimerical theories. He repeatedly exhorted his disciples in Padua to remain true to their Kabbalistic studies; whereupon the Council of Rabbis at Venice, which had received intelligence as to his proceedings, pronounced a sentence of excommunication in the synagogues and in the Ghetto, against all who possessed Kabbalistic writings or psalms of Luzzatto and who failed to deliver them to the Council.

In addition to his various occupations, with the Kabbala for his spiritual wants and glass-grinding for his temporal needs, Luzzatto published a masterpiece second to none in Hebrew poetry; a drama, perfect in form, language, and thought; a memorial of his gifts composed in diction that has immortalised him. Under the unpretentious form of a poem on the occasion of the wedding of his disciple, Jacob de Chaves, with the high-born maiden, Rachel de Vega Enriques, he published his drama, "Glory to the Virtuous" (*La-Yescharim Tehilla*). It differs materially from his earlier works. The poet had in the interval enjoyed various opportunities of gaining both pleasant and painful experiences, and of enriching his mental powers. His muse, grown more mature, had thrown her glance on the manifold intricacies of



actual life. Luzzatto had learnt to know the vulgar herd well enough to see that it resembles a reed swaying to and fro in the water, and is bound by the fetters of Deceit in a state of ignorance and infirmity against which Wisdom herself is powerless. He had been taught by experience how Folly yoked with Ignorance makes merry over those born of the Spirit, and mocks at their labours; that they measure the paths of the stars, observe the life of the vegetable world, behold God's works, and account them of less value than Mammon. Superficiality sees in all the events of life and of nature, however powerfully they may appeal to the heart, only the sport of Chance or the inflexible laws of a heartless Necessity. Luzzatto had proved in his own case that Craft and Pride, when closely united, can deprive Merit of its crown, and place it on its own head. None the less did he cherish the conviction, however, that Merit, though misjudged and calumniated, at last wins the day, and that its acknowledgment (Fame) will fall to its share like a bride, if only it allows itself to be led by Reason and her handmaid Patience, averting its gaze from ignoble strife and becoming absorbed in the wonders of Creation. "Could we only, with untroubled gaze, for a moment see the world as it is, divested of pretence, we should see Pride and Folly, which speak so scornfully of Virtue and Knowledge, deeply humbled." Through an extraordinary occurrence, a kind of miracle, Truth is revealed, Deceit is unmasked, Pride becomes a laughing-stock, and the fickle mob is led to recognise true Merit.

Luzzatto, in his dramatic parable, clothes and vivifies this train of ideas, and enunciates them in monologues and dialogues through the mouth of acting, or—to put it more correctly—speaking characters. Luzzatto's masterpiece is indeed not a drama in the strictest sense of the word. The

characters represented are not of flesh and blood, but mere inanimate ideas; Reason and Folly, Merit and Deceit, are placed on the stage. The dramatic action is slight, it is in truth a beautiful wreath of fragrant flowers of poesy, a series of delightful monologues and dialogues. In it Luzzatto embodies deep thoughts, generally difficult to quicken into life or to paint in poetical colours; but he succeeded. The wonderful evolution of the vegetable world, the extraordinary phenomena of light, are treated in dramatic verse by Luzzatto with the same facility as the appropriate subjects for poetry, and this too in the Hebrew language—unsuited as it is for the purposes of modern forms of thought—and in the self-imposed fetters of an inflexible form of versification. His work is full of music. Luzzatto employed a diction quite his own, replete with the delightful freshness of youth, beauty and harmony. In this he supplied a new impulse for the coming age. As the mists of error passed away the general chaos of thought became more orderly, a happier period opened, and youthful lovers of poetry kindled an inspiring flame from the soft warm rays diffused by the genius of Luzzatto. A modern Hebrew poet who helped to accomplish the transition from the old to the new period, David Franco Mendes, owes his inspiration to Luzzatto.

What might not Luzzatto have accomplished if he could but have liberated his mind from the extravagant follies of the Kabbala! But it held him captive in tightened bonds, and carried him, not long after the completion of his finest drama (about 1744) to Palestine. Here he imagined that he could listen unmolested to the inspirations of his excited fantasies, or play the *rôle* of a Messiah. From Safet, too, he continued his communications with his band of disciples; but before he could commence operations he fell a victim to the plague,

in the fortieth year of his age. His body was buried in Tiberias. The two greatest modern Hebrew poets, Luzzatto and Jehuda Halevi, rest in Hebrew soil. Even the tongues of the slanderous Jews of Palestine, to whom Luzzatto, with his peculiarities, must have seemed an enigma, could only speak well of him after his death. But nevertheless, he sowed bad seed. His Italian followers laid the foundations of the Kabbala afresh in Italy. His Polish disciple, Yekutiel of Wilna, whose buffooneries under the mask of mysticism had first led him into trouble, played scandalous tricks as an adventurer in Poland and Holland. Another Pole too Elijah Olianow, who belonged to Luzzatto's following, and proclaimed him as Messiah and himself as his Elijah, did not enjoy the best of reputations. This man also took part in the disgraceful disorders which broke out in Altona after Luzzatto's death, and which divided the Jews of Europe into two hostile camps—inaugurating a new inundation of the Sabbatian deluge of mire.

The foul pool which, since the prohibition of enquiry and the triumph of its enemy the Kabbala, had been for centuries in process of formation in Judaism was, with a perverse stupidity, being continually stirred up, defiling alike both the pure and impure. The spirit of tumult roused by the vain-glorious, false Messiah of Smyrna was not finally suppressed by the proscription of Chayon and the Polish Sabbatians, but showed itself in a still more ill-favoured aspect, forcing its way into circles which had hitherto appeared closed against it. The authority of the Rabbis with regard to the practical and dialectical interpretation of the Talmud had hitherto refused recognition to the Kabbala on equal terms, and had only here and there, so to speak, surreptitiously purloined something from it. Rabbinism had finally opposed the Sabbatian heresy, and pronounced an anathema against it; but one



influential Rabbi espoused its cause, admitted its importance, and declared war on its behalf in such manner that discipline and order were undermined, and all sense of consistency and of self-respect, of truth and rectitude were still more deadened. Ostensibly the cause of the conflict was the petty jealousy of two Rabbis. Its true origin, however, had a deeper foundation, in intellectual perversity and in the secret dislike on the one hand to the excess of ritualistic observances, and on the other to the extravagances of the Kabbala. The authors of this far-reaching schism—two Polish Rabbis of Altona—each unconsciously took a step across that threshold which bounded the sphere of orthodoxy. Diametrically opposed to each other in faculties and temperament, they were suited by their characters to be pitted against each other. Both Jonathan Eibeschütz and Jacob Emden had already taken part in the foregoing conflicts, and eventually gave these quarrels a more extended influence.

Jonathan Eibeschütz, or Eibeschützer (born at Cracow 1690, died 1764), was descended from a Polish family devoted to the Kabbala. His father, Nathan Nata, was for a short time Rabbi of a small market-town of Moravia, called Eibenschitz, from which his son derived his surname. Endowed with a remarkably acute and accurate intellect and a retentive memory, the youthful Jonathan, early left an orphan, received the irregular education, or rather bewildering instruction of the age, which supplied him with only two subjects on which to exercise his brains—the far-reaching sphere of the Talmud, with its labyrinthine mazes, and the ensnaring Kabbala, with its shallows full of hidden rocks. The one offered abundant food for his hungry reason, and the other for his ill-regulated fancy. With his hair-splitting ingenuity he might have made an adroit pettifogging attorney, qualified to make out brilliantly and successfully a justifica-

tion for the worst case; or, had he had access to the higher mathematics of Newton and Leibnitz, he might have accomplished much in this field as a discoverer. Eibeschütz had some taste for branches of learning beyond the sphere of the Talmud, and also a certain vanity that made him desire to excel in them; but this he could not satisfy. The perverted spirit of the Polish and German Jews of the time still closed to every aspiring youth those gates of the temple of science which are based on truth and keen observation, and drove him into the mazes of Rabbinical and Talmudic literature. From lack of more wholesome food for his active intellect, young Eibeschütz filled his brain with pernicious matter, and want of method forced him into the crooked paths of sophistry. He imagined indeed, or wished it to be supposed, that he had acquired every variety of knowledge, but neither his writings on subjects connected with the Talmud, so far as it is possible to judge of them, nor his sermons, neither his compositions on the Kabbala, nor the mass of his occasional papers, reveal anything that can be described as knowledge or solid learning. Eibeschütz was not even familiar with the Jewish philosophers who wrote in the Hebrew language; he was only at home in the Talmud. This he could manipulate like soft clay, give it any form he desired, and he could unravel the most intricately entangled skeins. He surpassed all his contemporaries and predecessors not only in his knowledge of the Talmud, but also in ready wit.

But Eibeschütz did not derive complete satisfaction from his scholarship; it only served to sharpen his wits, to afford him amusement, and, to some extent, to dazzle others. His restless nature and fiery temperament could not content themselves with this; but aspired to a higher goal. This goal, however, was unknown even to himself, or was only dimly shadowed before his mind. Hence his

life and conduct appear enigmatical and full of contradictions. Had he lived in the age of the struggle for reform, for the loosening of the bands of authority, he would have been among the assailants, and would have employed his Talmudical learning and aggressive wit as a lever to upheave the edifice of Rabbinical Judaism, and to oppose the Talmud with the weapons it had supplied against itself. For he was easy-going, and disliked the gloomy piety of the German and Polish Jews; and though impressed by it, he lacked the necessary fervour to yield to its influence. He therefore found mysticism as interpreted by the followers of Sabbataï very comforting; the Law was to be abolished by the commencement of the Messianic era, and the spirit which inspired the Kabbala demanded no over-scrupulousness with regard to trifles. Nehemiah Chayon appears to have made a great impression on Eibeschütz when he was a young man in Prague or Hamburg. With the Sabbatian Löbele Prosnitz, he was on terms of constant, if not confidential intercourse. He studied thoroughly the works of Abraham Michael Cardoso, though they were publicly condemned and branded as heretical. Eibeschütz had indeed adopted the blasphemous tenets of both these Sabbatians—namely, that there is no relation of any kind between the Most High God, the First Cause, and the Universe, but that a second person in the Godhead, the God of Israel, the image and prototype of the former, created the world, gave the Law, chose Israel, and, in short governs the Finite. He appears also to have embraced the conclusions deduced from this heretical theory, that Sabbataï Zevi was the true Messiah, that the second Person of the Godhead was incorporated in him, and that, through this manifestation, the Torah had ceased to have any importance.

But Eibeschütz had not sufficient strength of



character or determination to act in conformity with his convictions. It would have been contrary to his nature to have broken openly with Rabbinical Judaism by proclaiming himself an anti-Talmudist, and, as had been done by so many Sabbatians, to wage war against the whole of Judaism. He was too practical and loved his ease too well to expose himself to the disagreeable consequences of such a rupture. Should he, like Chayon, wander forth as a fugitive through Asia and Europe, and back again? Besides, he loved the Talmud and Rabbinical literature as his mental food, and could not do without it. The contradictions in his career and the disorders which he originated may be traced to a want of harmony between his intellect and his temperament. Rabbinical Judaism did not altogether suit him, but the sources from which it was derived were indispensable to him, and had they not been in existence he would have created them. Fettered by this contradiction he deceived not only the world, but also himself; he could not arrive at any clear understanding with himself, and was a hypocrite without intending it.

At one-and-twenty Eibeschutz already directed a school in Prague, and a band of students of the Talmud who loved subtlety gathered round him, hung on his lips, and admired his stirring and almost playful style of dealing with difficulties. He captivated and inspired his pupils by his genial, one might almost say scholar-like disposition, by his sparkling wit, and cutting sallies, which did not always keep within the bounds of propriety. His manner towards his pupils was altogether different from that of Rabbis of the ordinary type; he did not slink along gloomily, subdued by penances and with bowed head; he imposed no such restraints on them but allowed them to move with great freedom. Sociability and lively interesting conversation were necessities to him. For these reasons the number

of Eibeschütz's scholars yearly increased and could be counted by thousands. By the time he was thirty he was therefore regarded not alone in Prague, but far and wide as a recognised authority. It has already been stated that the Council of Rabbis of Frankfort-on-the-Maine had before them clear proofs of Eibeschütz's connection with Löbele Prosnitz and the Polish Sabbatians. But his extensive influence and the great number of his disciples protected him from being included in the sentence of excommunication pronounced against others. He had the hardihood to meet the suspicions against himself by excommunicating the Sabbatians (1725). Moses Chages, the man who was without "respect of persons," the "watchman of Zion" of that age, thereupon predicted that the forbearance shown him would prove hurtful. In fact, Eibeschütz was at that time deeply committed to the Sabbatian heresies, confessed the fact to Meir Eisenstadt, the teacher of his youth, who knew his erring ways, and, apparently ashamed and repentant, promised amendment. Thanks to Meir's clemency Eibeschütz maintained his reputation, which was increased by his erudition, his ever-growing body of disciples, and his activity. The suspicion of his heresy was by degrees forgotten, and the community of Prague, in recognition of his merits, appointed him to be preacher (1728).

In another matter too Eibeschütz left the beaten path and placed himself in a somewhat ambiguous light. Either from vanity or calculation, he entered into intimate relations with the Jesuits in Prague. He carried on discussions with them, behaving towards them with a certain freedom, as if he were not under the same restraints as other Jews. He associated, for instance, with that spiritual tyrant, Hasselbauer, the Jesuit Bishop of Prague, who frequently made domiciliary visits among the Jews in order to search for and confiscate unlicensed

Hebrew books. Through this intimacy Eibeschtütz obtained from the Bishop the privilege of being permitted to print the Talmud, which had so often been proscribed by the Church of Rome. Did he act thus from self-interest, with the view of compelling the Bohemian Jews to use only such copies of the Talmud as were printed by him, and in this way create a remunerative business, the profits of which were to be shared with the Jesuits? This was most positively asserted in many Jewish circles. Eibeschtütz obtained permission to print from the episcopal Censorial authority, but only on condition that every expression and every word in the Talmud which, in howsoever small a degree, appeared to be antagonistic to Christianity should be expunged; and to this process of mutilation he agreed (1728-1739). Such obsequious pliability to the Jesuits excited the displeasure of many Jews. The community of Frankfort-on-the-Maine spent a considerable sum—Moses Chages and perhaps, too, David Oppenheim, being at the bottom of the movement—in their efforts to obtain from the Emperor a prohibition against the Prague printing-press. Eibeschtütz, on the other hand, also used his connection with Christian circles to avert the perils impending over the Bohemian Jews.

Eibeschtütz's early heretical leanings were however not yet absolutely forgotten. When the post of Rabbi at Metz became vacant, he applied for it. While the Council were occupied with the election, the grey-haired widow of the late Rabbi appeared at the meeting, and warned them not to insult her dead husband in his grave and the other pious Rabbis who had preceded him, by appointing a man who was a heretic, and perhaps worse (a Mumar), as his successor. This solemn admonition from the venerable matron who was related to the wife of Eibeschtütz so impressed the Council that his election was allowed to fall through. Jacob Joshua Falk



was therefore appointed at Metz. He remained there however only a few years, and, on being transferred to Frankfort-on-the-Maine, Eibeschutz was chosen in his place. But before he entered on his duties the Austrian War of Succession broke out, a struggle between youthful aspiring Prussia, under Frederick the Great, and Austria, already grown old, under Maria Theresa. A French army, in conjunction with Prussia and the opposition Emperor Charles VII., occupied Prague. The proverbially stupid population of Bohemia and Moravia conceived the false notion that the Jews were treacherously taking part with the enemy. It was said that Frederick the Great, the Protestant heretic, was an especial patron of the Jews. Hence in Moravia, where the Prussians had not yet penetrated, there occurred passionate outbursts of fury against the Jews. An Austrian Field-Marshal in Moravia, under the delusion of the Jews' treachery, issued a decree that the communities, within six days, should "pay down in cash 50,000 Rhenish gulden at Brünn, failing which, they would all be delivered over to pillage and the sword." Through the devoted exertions of Baron de Aguilar and the wealthy Rabbi, Isachar Berusch Eskeles—two members of the Viennese community—this decree was revoked by the Empress, Maria Theresa (21st March). These men also averted another crushing disaster which threatened their fellow-countrymen.

Jonathan Eibeschutz, when appointed Rabbi of Metz, either from self-conceit or in order to secure for himself the post of Rabbi in French Lorraine, had imprudently secured the favour of the French soldiery who occupied the town. He obtained from the French commandant a safe conduct enabling him to travel unmolested to France, and thereby aroused in the Bohemian population the suspicion that he had a treasonable under-

standing with the enemy. After the departure of the French (end of 1742), the Austrian authorities held an inquiry into his conduct; and all of his property, which had not been seized by the Croats, was sequestered. Eventually all the Moravian and Bohemian Jews were suspected of treason against the State. The most Catholic Empress, who was at the same time good-natured and hard-hearted, published a decree (18th Dec., 1744, for Bohemia; 2d January, 1745, for Moravia), that all the Jews in both these royal provinces should, "for several important reasons," within a brief period be banished; and that Jews who should be found still remaining in these Crown lands after the expiration of this period would be "removed by force of arms." Terrible severity was also shown in enforcing this decree. The Jews of Prague, more than 20,630 souls, were obliged in the depth of winter, hurriedly to leave the town and to suffer in the villages; and the royal cities were forbidden to harbour any of those who passed through. The position of the Bohemian and Moravian Jews was pitiable. Whither should they turn? In the eighteenth century the Jews were not in request or made welcome on account of their wealth as they had hitherto been. As Eibeschutz felt that he was in some measure to blame for their misfortunes, he took trouble to obtain some relief for them. He preached on their behalf in Metz, and addressed letters to the largest communities in the South of France, Bayonne and Bordeaux, asking for aid, and wrote to the Roman community begging them to intercede with the Pope on behalf of his unhappy brethren. It was all, however, of but little avail. More efficacious appears to have been the intercession of De Aguilar, Berusch Eskeles, and other Jews connected with the Court of Vienna. The clergy, too, spoke on their behalf, and the ambassadors of Holland and England interceded warmly and effectually for them. The

empress revoked her severe decree, and permitted the Jews in both the royal provinces to remain for an indefinite time (15th May, 1745). In the case of the Prague community alone, which was chiefly under suspicion, the strictness of the decree was not relaxed. Not till some years later, in consequence of a declaration by the States of the Empire "that, owing to their departure a loss of many millions was impending," was the previous term of residence for all Jews prolonged to ten years, but under degrading conditions. They were to be diminished rather than be permitted to increase, their exact number being fixed. Only the eldest son was permitted to found a family. Some 20,000 "Familianten," as they were called, were allowed in Bohemia and 5,100 in Moravia, who were obliged to pay annually to the Imperial Treasury a sum of about 200,000 gulden. These restrictions were maintained almost up to the Revolution of 1848. Jonathan Eibeschütz, either rightly or wrongly, was declared a traitor to his country and forbidden ever to set foot on Austrian soil.

If, during the first years he passed in Metz, he was so popular that the community would not allow him to accept the post of Rabbi at Fürth, when it was offered to him, he must have made himself disagreeable later on, as during his difficulties, he could not find supporters there, nor any witnesses as to his innocence. If also he committed only a small portion of the mean actions with which he was reproached, his life must have presented a striking contrast to the sermons which he composed. Eibeschütz did not feel altogether at home in Metz; he missed the bustling, argumentative band of young admirers, and the wide platform on which to display his Talmudical erudition. In France there were fewer students of the Talmud; and it was therefore pardonable that he should have strenuously exerted himself to obtain the post of Rabbi of



the "Three Communities" (Hamburg, Altona, and Wandsbeck). Thanks to the efforts of his connections and admirers, and his fame as the most distinguished of Talmudists and miracle workers, the choice fell on him. As the Jews of the three towns had their own civil jurisdiction, based on Rabbinical law, they required an acute Rabbi who was also a lawyer, and they could not, from this point of view, have made a better selection.

But an evil spirit seems to have entered Altona with his instalment, which threw into disorder not only the Three Communities, but also the whole of German and Polish Judaism. Eibeschutz, however, though not free from blame in this, must not alone be made answerable. The tendency of the age was also culpable, and Jacob Emden, the unattached Rabbi, was more especially the prime mover in the strife. He desired to unmask hypocrisy, and in doing so laid bare the weak side of his Jewish contemporaries.

Jacob Emden Ashkenazi (abbreviated into Jabez; born 1698, died 1776) resembled his father Chacham Zevi, as a branch does its parent stem; or rather he made the father whom he so devotedly admired his model in everything. The perverted spirit of the age prevented his following his natural bent and inspirations. A true son of the Talmud, he seriously believed that a Jew ought only to occupy himself with other branches of knowledge during "the hour of twilight," and considered it unlawful to read newspapers on the Sabbath. He too was well versed in the Talmud, and set a high value on the Kabbala and the Zohar, of the dangerous extravagances of which he had at first known nothing. Philosophy, although he possessed no knowledge of it, was an abomination to him. In his obliquity of mental vision he maintained it to be impossible that the philosophical work, "The Guide," could have been composed by the orthodox Rabbi,

Maimuni. In character he was just, truth-loving, and intellectually profound, and herein he formed a sharp contrast to Jonathan Eibeschütz. Whatever he considered as true or false, he did not hesitate forthwith to defend or condemn with incisive acuteness; it was contrary to his nature to be skilful in concealment, dissimulation, to hide his opinions, or to play the hypocrite. He differed from Eibeschütz too in another respect. The latter was kindly, pliant, careless, cheerful and sociable; Emden, on the contrary, was unsociable, unbending, earnest, melancholy and a lover of solitude. Well-to-do, and maintaining himself by his business, Emden was almost precluded from undertaking the work of a Rabbi. He was too well aware of his own craving for independence, his narrowness, and impetuosity. Only once had he bestirred himself to accept the office of Rabbi, in Emden (from which he derived his surname); but he relinquished it again after a few years on account of his dislike to the work and from ill-health, and settled in Altona. He obtained from the King of Denmark the privilege of establishing a printing-press; built a house with a private synagogue, and established, with his family and a few friends, a community within the community; he indeed visited the exchange, but he lived enwrapped in a dream-world of his own.

Emden was on the list of candidates for the appointment of Rabbi to the Three Communities. His few friends worked for him and urged him to exert himself to try and obtain the post. He, however, resisted all their solicitations and declared decidedly, that he would not accept the election even if the choice fell on him, but he was none the less aggrieved that he obtained only a few votes; and he entertained an unfriendly feeling towards Eibeschütz, who was preferred. There was yet another peculiarity in Emden's character; his antipathy to

heretics. His father, Chacham Zevi, had undauntedly pursued Nehemiah Chayon and the other Sabbatians, and had brought himself into a painful position by so doing. Emden desired nothing more ardently than to follow his father, and would not have shunned martyrdom in the cause. Since the return of Moses Chages to Palestine, he considered himself as the watchman on behalf of orthodoxy among his fellow-believers. He was the Jewish Grand Inquisitor, and was ever in readiness to hurl the thunders of excommunication wherever heresy, particularly belief in Sabbataï Zevi, should show itself. The opportunity of exercising his unpaid office of inquisitor; of proving his zeal for orthodoxy by his deeds, and even of suffering in its behalf, was imparted to him by Jonathan Eibeschütz.

At the time when Eibeschütz entered on his duties as Rabbi a painful agitation was prevalent among the Jews of the Three Communities. Within the year several young women had died in childbirth. Every wife in expectation of becoming a mother awaited the approaching hour with increasing anxiety. The coming of the new Rabbi, who should drive away the destroying angel by whom young women had been selected as victims was therefore awaited with eager longing. At that time every Rabbi was regarded as a protector against every species of evil (*Megîn*), a sort of magician, and the wives of Hamburg and Altona, therefore, expected great things from Jonathan Eibeschütz, who had been heralded by his admirers as the most gifted of Rabbis and a worker of miracles. How would he respond to these anxious expectations? Eibeschütz would have been forced, in any case, to resort to some mystification in order to assert his authority in his new office. He, therefore, immediately after his arrival prepared certain talismans—writings for exorcising spirits (*Cameos*, *Kameoth*)—for the terrified women, and indulged



besides in other forms of imposing magic. He had already distributed similar amulets in Metz, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and other places; but from Frankfort a rumour had reached Altona that the talismans of Eibeschütz were of an altogether different nature to what they originally purported to be, and that they were heretical in character. Out of curiosity one of the amulets distributed by the Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Eibeschütz, was opened in Altona; and it was found to contain the following invocation:

“O God of Israel, Thou who dwellest in the adornment of Thy might [a Kabbalistic allusion], send through the merit of Thy servant, Sabbataï Zevi, healing for this woman, whereby Thy name and the name of Thy Messiah, Sabbataï Zevi, may be sanctified in the world.”

It is hard to tell which is more surprising—Eibeschütz's stupid belief in and attachment to the impostor of Smyrna, who had apostatized from Judaism, or his reckless imprudence in thus exposing himself. He had indeed altered the words a little, and put certain letters to represent others; but he must have known that the key to his riddle was easy to find. These attempts at deception naturally did not remain a secret; the amulets came into the hands of Emden, who no longer entertained any doubt that Eibeschütz still adhered to the Sabbatian heresy. But if he rejoiced greatly at having found an opportunity of exercising his office of inquisitor, he nevertheless stood in some doubt as to the consequences of doing so. How should he begin a contest with a man who had an extensive reputation as the most learned Talmudist of his day; as an orthodox Rabbi, some of whose numerous disciples—over 20,000 it was said—were already Rabbis, officials of communities, and holders of influential posts, who clung to him with admiration, and were ready to form a phalanx round him and to exert all their energies in his defence. But,

on the other hand, the matter could not be suppressed, it having been discussed in the Jews' quarter and on the exchange. The elders felt obliged to interrogate Eibeschütz on the matter, and he replied by a pitiful evasion. The Council, whether believing Eibeschütz or not, was bound to lend him a helping hand, and to bury the matter. What a disgrace for the highly respected Three Communities, which a quarter of a century earlier had condemned and branded the Sabbatians as heretics, that they themselves should have chosen a Sabbatian as their Chief Rabbi! Jacob Emden, from whose zeal the worst was to be dreaded, was therefore partially beguiled by flatteries, and partially intimidated by threats to refrain from making too much of the affair. But these threats against him necessarily led to publicity. Emden solemnly declared in his synagogue that he held the writer of the amulets to be a Sabbatian heretic who deserved to be excommunicated, that he did not indeed charge the Chief Rabbi with their composition, but that the latter was in duty bound to clear himself from suspicion. This declaration caused a deep sensation in the Three Communities and aroused vehement animosity. The Council, and the greater part of the community, regarded it as a gross piece of presumption, and as an encroachment upon their jurisdiction. The friends of Eibeschütz, and especially his disciples, fanned the flame. Confidence in his authority was already so great that some did not hesitate to declare that if their Rabbi believed in Sabbataï Zevi, they also shared his belief. Without putting Emden on his trial the Council arbitrarily decreed that no one, under pain of excommunication, should attend his synagogue, which was to be closed, and that he should not publish anything at his printing establishment. And now began a struggle which at first produced abundant evil, but which had in the end

a purifying effect. Jonathan Eibeschütz published the affair far and wide among his numerous friends and disciples in Bohemia, Moravia and Poland, and painted himself as an innocent man unjustly accused, and Jacob Emden as an audacious fellow who had the presumption to brand him as a heretic. He was hurried along from one untruth to another, from violence to violence; but he had nevertheless many partisans to support him. Jacob Emden on the contrary stood well-nigh alone, for the few who adhered to him had not the courage to come forward openly. He however informed his friends and Eibeschütz's enemies on the same day of what had occurred. The foolish affair of the amulets thus acquired a notoriety which it was impossible to check. Every Jew capable of forming an opinion on the subject took one side or the other; the majority adhered to Eibeschütz. Many indeed could not conceive it possible that such a distinguished Talmudist could be a Sabbatian, and the accusation against him was therefore accounted as a base slander on the part of the irascible and malignant Emden. Great ignorance prevailed with regard to the character and history of the Sabbatians (or Shäbs, as they were termed), for a quarter of a century had passed since they were everywhere excommunicated. Public opinion was therefore at first unequivocally in Eibeschütz's favour.

Eibeschütz thoroughly understood how to win over his opponents to his side, and to soothe them with illusions. He convened a meeting in the synagogue and took a solemn oath that he did not adhere to one single article of the Sabbatian creed; "if he did, might fire and brimstone descend on him from heaven!" He went on to anathematise this sect with all kinds of maledictions, and excommunicated the adversary who had slandered him, and originated these elements of strife. This solemn declaration made a deep impression. Who could



doubt the innocence of a Rabbi of such high standing when he called God to witness respecting it? The Council of the Three Communities considered itself fully justified in ordering Emden, as a common slanderer, to leave Altona. As he refused, and appealed to the royal clemency, he was cut off from all intercourse with others, pursued by intrigues, and relentlessly persecuted. This treatment only roused Emden to more strenuous efforts. Letters had in the meantime been sent from Metz with other amulets (1751), which Eibeschutz had distributed there, and the genuineness of which he had himself admitted, clearly demonstrating that, as a matter of fact, he had acknowledged Sabbataï Zevi as a Messiah and saviour. The Metz amulets were in the main of the same character:—

“In the name of the God of Israel . . . . of the God of His anointed Sabbataï Zevi, through whose wounds healing is come to us, who with the breath of His mouth slays the Evil One, I adjure all spirits and demons not to injure the bearer of this amulet.”

A judicial examination of these amulets was made by the council of Rabbis and Elders; and all who had any in their possession were commanded to deliver them up under pain of excommunication. A royal procurator confirmed their authenticity; that is to say, they were proved by the evidence of witnesses on oath to be the work of Eibeschutz; who did not find one person of note in Metz to maintain his honour. It was some small satisfaction to Jacob Emden to know that he did not stand alone in his conflict; but this concurrence in his views did not profit him much. The members of the Three Communities, with the exception of a small minority, adhered to Eibeschutz and made his cause their own. It was forbidden to anyone to speak a slanderous word against the Chief Rabbi. To all appearance his enemies had conceived their plans well—he received notice from all quarters as to what was designed against him—but there was

no definite scheme. His disciples, on the contrary, were extraordinarily zealous in his behalf. One of these, Chayim of Lublin, had the courage, in glorification of Eibeschütz and in defamation of his opponents to excommunicate three of the latter in his synagogue—Jacob Emden, Nehemiah Reischer, and an elder in Metz, Moses Mayo, because they had dared to slander “that most perfect man, Jonathan, in whom God glorified Himself.” This decree of excommunication was distributed throughout Poland for observance and imitation. The remaining Polish Rabbis were either known to be supporters of Eibeschütz, having been bribed, or they were indifferent in the matter. In Königsberg and Breslau, for example, large sums were advanced in order to commend the case of Eibeschütz to the Rabbis of those towns. Matters did not stop however, at excommunications and anathemas; in Altona (25th Isar = May) they culminated in a riot. A hand to hand fight took place, and the police had to be called in. In consequence of this, Jacob Emden, believing his life to be endangered through the fury of Eibeschütz’s partisans, fled one day to Amsterdam, and was kindly received there. Emden’s wife was ordered by the Council not to part with any of his property, as an action for damages would be brought against him.

Eibeschütz was, however, acute enough to perceive that the residence of Jacob Emden in Amsterdam might prove dangerous, as he would have full scope there, by means of his trenchant pen, to expose the Rabbi’s past history through the press. In order to counteract this, Eibeschütz issued to his followers in Germany, Poland and Italy, an Encyclical Epistle (Letter of Zeal, 3rd Sivan, 1751), in which, under the guise of an exhortation that they should bear testimony to his orthodoxy, he besought them to make his cause their own. He urged them to prosecute his

adversary with all their energy and by every possible means: it would be reckoned to their account as a special merit by the Almighty. This greatly resembled the command of a popular general to thousands of his soldiers to attack, and pitilessly ill-treat defenceless men. In order to complete the delusion, he induced two men, devotedly attached to mysticism, but not to truth—Elijah Olianow and Samuel Essingen—to declare that his amulets contained nothing dangerous or heretical, but a great deal of deep orthodox mysticism intelligible only to the few.

Eibeschutz had, however, no just grounds for securing a triumph in the end. The excess of insolence on the part of the newly-fledged young Rabbi of Lublin in excommunicating gray-haired Rabbis aroused the leading men in the communities. A cry of anger resounded from Lorraine to Podolia at this piece of arrogance, which was justly suspected to be due to the instigation of Eibeschutz. Three Rabbis at length combined together—Joshua Falk, Leb Heschels and Heilmann, and others joined them. Eibeschutz was challenged to exculpate himself before a meeting of Rabbis regarding the amulets ascribed to him, which undeniably appeared to be heretical. As was to be anticipated, Eibeschutz declined to justify himself in any way, and the confederates took council as to what further steps should be pursued against him. The scandal continued to increase. The newspapers reported the quarrel amongst the Jews regarding the Rabbi of Altona. Christians naturally could not comprehend the nature of the dispute. It was said that a vehement controversy had arisen amongst the Jews as to whether the Messiah had or had not already appeared. The Jews were derided because they preferred to believe in the impostor Sabbataï Zevi, rather than in Jesus. This reacted again on the Jews, and the two parties imputed to each other



the offence of this scandal, this "profanation of God's name." An energetic man, Baruch Yavan, of Poland, transferred the schism to that country. He was a disciple of Falk's, agent to the notorious Saxon Minister, Brühl, and enjoyed a considerable reputation in Poland. Through his intrigues, a Polish magnate deprived Chayim Lublin of his office as Rabbi, and ordered that he and his father be thrown into prison (Elul=Sept., 1751). In Poland the controversy assumed a still worse character—bribery, information through spies, acts of violence and treachery being among its leading features. Seceders from each party betrayed the secrets of one to the other. Every fair and every assembly was a battlefield, on which the partizans of Eibeschütz and Falk contended. The proceedings at the synods were even more disorderly than in the Polish Reichstag. When the defenders of either side proved more numerous or more energetic the weaker party was excommunicated. The supporters of Eibeschütz were in the main more active. Count Brühl made them as many empty promises of protection as he bestowed on their opponents through Baruch Yavan.

In Germany, as might have been expected, matters were conducted with more moderation. The Rabbinical triumvirate published a decision to the effect that the writer of the Sabbatian amulets should be banished and cut off from communion with Israel. Every devout Jew lay under an obligation to persecute him to the utmost extent in his power. No one might study the Talmud under his guidance. All who supported his cause were to be excommunicated. No mention, however, was made of Eibeschütz's name. Many German Rabbis concurred in this moderate decision, as also did those Venetian Rabbis who had banished Luzzatto. The resolution was delivered to Eibeschütz and the Council of the Three Communities (Feb.,

1752), and notice was given to Eibeschutz that within three months he must clear himself before a Rabbinical Court of Arbitration of the suspicion that he was the author of heretical amulets, failing which his name would be publicly stigmatised. This sentence of excommunication was to be printed by the Venetian Council of Rabbis and published throughout the East and Africa. But Eibeschutz understood how to meet this blow craftily. The Italian Rabbis were, for the most part, reluctant to burn their fingers in this violent quarrel, and declined to participate in it in any way. The Council of Rabbis at Leghorn, and especially Malachi Cohen, the last of the Italian Rabbinical authorities, inclined towards the side of Eibeschutz. The Portuguese in Amsterdam and London designedly kept themselves aloof from this domestic squabble among the Germans and Poles. One broker of Amsterdam, David Pinto, alone espoused Eibeschutz's cause, and threatened Emden with his anger if he continued his hostility. The Council of Rabbis in Constantinople, dazzled by Eibeschutz's illustrious name, or deceived by him, declared decidedly for him, but would not pronounce a direct sentence of excommunication against his antagonists. What they neglected was done by a so-called envoy from Jerusalem, Abraham Israel, a presumptuous mendicant, who as a representative of the Holy Land and the Jewish nation, imprecated and anathematised all who should even utter a slanderous word against Eibeschutz. Thus almost the whole of Israel was excommunicated; on the one side those who showed enmity towards the very illustrious Chief Rabbi of the Three Communities, and on the other those who supported that heretic. Thus the effects of the excommunication were for the most nullified, or rather it became ridiculous, and with it there fell to the ground one of the articles of Rabbinical Judaism.

A new turn was given to this disagreeable controversy when it was transferred from its original home to the law courts of the Christians. In this matter the fanaticism of Eibeschutz' followers was more to blame than the conduct of their opponents. One of the leading men in Altona, who had so far remained true to the cause of the persecutors, in a letter to his brother showed himself to be somewhat doubtful as to its justice. This letter was opened by the followers of Eibeschutz, and the writer, set down as a traitor, was expelled from the Council, ill-treated, and threatened with banishment from Altona. There remained no alternative for him but to address himself to the Government of Holstein, to the King of Denmark, Frederick V., and unsparingly expose all the illegalities, meannesses and violence of which Eibeschutz and his party had been guilty. By this means the unjust conduct of the Council of the Community with regard to Jacob Emden and his wife was brought to light. An authenticated copy of the suspected amulets was translated into German. The trial was conducted with extreme bitterness; both parties spared no expense. The plaintiff and his faction in their anger did not confine themselves to necessary statements, but brought forward by way of information, as accusation against Eibeschutz, much that was of an innocent nature. King Frederick, who loved justice, and his minister Bernstorff, gave judgment against the followers of Eibeschutz (3rd June, 1752). The Council of Altona was severely censured for its illegal and harsh treatment of Jacob Emden, and punished by a fine of 100 thalers. Emden was not only permitted to return to Altona, but the use of his synagogue and his printing establishment was restored. Eibeschutz was deprived of authority as Rabbi of the Hamburg community, and ordered to clear himself with regard to the incriminating amulets, and to answer



fifteen questions propounded to him. Events thus took an unfortunate turn for him. Even the well-intentioned letter of a partisan sent to him from Poland served to show how desperate his case was. Ezekiel Landau (born 1720, died 1793) had already as a young man aroused hopes that he would become a second Jonathan Eibeschütz in Rabbinical learning and sagacity. His opinion as Rabbi of Jampol (Podolia) already carried great weight. Landau wrote with youthful simplicity and straightforwardness to Eibeschütz that the amulets, which he had seen for himself, were without doubt Sabbatian and heretical. He therefore could not believe that the honoured and devout Rabbi of Altona had written them, and for that reason was as much in favour of condemning the amulets as he was of upholding Jonathan Eibeschütz and of declaring war against his adversaries. He entreated Eibeschütz to condemn the amulets as heretical and take the opportunity of clearing himself from the accusation that he was the author of the slanderous writings, full of unworthy expressions about God, and to condemn them leaf by leaf. This was, indeed, a severe blow from the hand of a friend. As Eibeschütz had at one time acknowledged the amulets to be genuine, and had only sophistically explained away their heresy, he was now in an evil case. A follower of Emden's in addition published the correspondence and decisions of Eibeschütz's enemies (who had condemned his whole conduct), together with an account of the amulets and their true interpretation ("The Utterance of Truth," printed Aug., 1752). Emden himself published the history of the false Messiah, Sabbatai Zevi, and the visionaries and knaves who had succeeded him down to Chayon and Luzzatto, vividly describing the errors and disorderly excesses of the Sabbatians before the eyes of his own generation, which was careless with regard to historical events, and had but a very

scanty and imperfect knowledge on the subject. Thus it was made clear to many that the Sabbatian heresy aimed at nothing less than the dethronement of the God of Israel in favour of a phantom, and the dissolution of Judaism by means of Kabbalistic chimeras. But the worst that befel Eibeschütz was that Emden himself returned unmolested to Altona, and had the prospect of being indemnified for his losses.

The dangerous position in which Eibeschütz found himself of being unmasked as a heretic in the courts of law, and before the eyes of the world, determined him to a step which a Rabbi of the old stamp of honest piety, even under peril of death, could not have taken. He associated himself with an apostate baptized Jew, formerly his pupil, in order to obtain assistance from him in his difficulties. Moses Gerson Cohen, of Mitau, who was, on his mother's side, descended from Chayim Vital Calabrese, had studied the Talmud under Eibeschütz for seven years in Prague, then travelled in the East, and, after his return to Europe, had been baptized in Wolfenbüttel under the name Charles Antony. He was appointed by his patron, the Duke of Brunswick, Reader of Hebrew in Helmstadt. It was afterwards proved that this convert became a Christian solely from self-interest.

To him the Chief Rabbi of the Three Communities secretly repaired in order to induce him to compose a vindication, or rather a panegyric of his conduct. It is evident on the face of it, even at the present day, that the work was written "to order," and it further transpired that Eibeschütz dictated it to Charles Antony. In it he is extolled as the most sagacious and upright Jew of his time, as a man versed in philosophy, history, and mathematics, and as a persecuted victim. Jacob Emden, on the other hand, is represented as an incompetent and envious fellow. Antony dedicated this

work to the King of Denmark, and commended to him the case of the supposed innocent and persecuted man. This plot, in combination with another cunningly chosen expedient, had favourable results for Eibeschütz. In point of fact, he screened himself not only behind a baptized Jew, but behind a princess. King Frederick V. had married, as his second wife, a princess of Brunswick, Maria Juliana, and a Jewish agent—a partisan of Eibeschütz—did business at the Court of Brunswick. The latter made the most of his direct and indirect influence with the young Danish princess, and said a good word to her on behalf of the Chief Rabbi who was under accusation of heresy. Thus it came about that the decision as to the amulet was issued by the Court, with the comment that the majority of Rabbis, except some litigious and malevolent individuals, sided with Eibeschütz—a proof of the justice of his cause. A royal decree, forbidding the continuation of this controversy, was read aloud in the synagogue of Altona (7th Feb., 1753). At the suggestion of the Government the vote of the community with regard to Eibeschütz was again taken, and resulted in his favour. He then took the oath of fealty to the king, and his position was once more assured. His sagacity had for the second time gained the day, but his success was only transitory. The number of his enemies had materially increased even in Altona through the far-reaching dissensions and the better knowledge which had little by little been gleaned as to his character. His adversaries did not allow themselves to be silenced by the decisive sentence of the king without making another effort; and they were most strenuous in persuading the Rabbinical triumvirate to draw up a petition for the revision of the proceedings for heresy against Eibeschütz, and especially to convince the king that the assertion that the majority of the Rabbis were



his partizans was based entirely on a misconception, but that on the contrary he was supported only by his relatives and his disciples. The three Rabbis, and the Rabbi of Hanover, forthwith laid before the Council a demand that it should consider Eibeschütz as excommunicated, and that it should forbid him to exercise any Rabbinical function until he should have repented of his heresy and promised amendment. Hostile writings by Emden and others stirred the fire of dissension still further; they were written in vehement and pitiless language and were full of petty gossip. In order to calm the public wrath, the Altona Council, with great difficulty, induced Eibeschütz to make a binding declaration that he was prepared of his own free-will to justify himself before an impartial Rabbinical Court of Arbitration, and to submit to its decision (beginning of 1753). But this only still further inflamed the strife. Eibeschütz proposed as his judges two Rabbis, of Lissa and Glogau, men but little known, and who were to add a third to their number. But the opposite party insisted that the Court of Umpires should be composed of Joshua Falk and his colleagues. This angered Eibeschütz, who lost the calmness of mind he had hitherto displayed. At one time he desired to submit his cause to the Rabbis of Constantinople, at another he proposed the Synod of the Four Polish Countries, which was to meet in Jaroslav late in the summer of 1753. He appears to have reckoned on obtaining a favourable sentence from an assemblage composed of many Rabbis and influential persons. Relying on this, he believed that he could easily free himself from the compact forced upon him, of submitting himself to a Court of Arbitration. He is said to have managed this by giving information at the Court, it being an encroachment on the royal prerogative to appeal from the judgment of the Sovereign to the

Rabbis. Both parties were therefore fined by the magistrates. This, however, only increased the number of his enemies; and several of his warmest supporters and former adherents renounced him, and proclaimed him to be not only a heretic but an intriguer. These opponents complained once more to the king with regard to the prevalent dissensions in the community, of which he was the cause; they could not, they said, obtain an impartial judgment from him in their lawsuits, because he allowed himself to be guided in his decisions by spite and passion. The justice-loving king yielded to these complaints. He desired once for all to arrive at a definite conclusion with regard to the state of the case—as to whether Eibeschutz was an arch-heretic, as his opponents maintained, or the persecuted innocent as he described himself.

With this view the king ordered certain Christian professors and theologians versed in Hebrew, to give him their opinion with regard to the amulets. Eibeschutz felt uneasy at the turn affairs had taken; he feared that the affair might prove disastrous to him. In order to place himself in a favourable light he resolved on a course which he had hitherto hesitated to adopt—to dispose public opinion in his favour through the press. As things then stood, there was no other course open to him, and he therefore composed an apology for himself—the “Register of Evidence,” completed 18th Tammuz, end of June, 1755—the first production of his pen. As might have been expected from a man of his ability, it is skilfully worked out; and he places his case in a favourable light. But Eibeschutz was unable to convince either his impartial contemporaries or posterity of his innocence. On the contrary, his vindication, and much of the evidence adduced by him, clearly betray his guilt. Emden and his disciple, David Gans, did not fail to publish

refutations in order to draw attention to the weak points and to throw doubt on the testimony in favour of Eibeschütz.

A publication by a professor and pastor, David Frederick Megerlin, early in 1756, made a fresh diversion, apparently in Eibeschütz' favour, with respect to this vexed question. This confused babbler and proselytiser induced by the order of the Danish king to pronounce an opinion upon the matter, imagined he had discovered the key to the enigmatical amulets of Eibeschütz, the disputed characters which his opponents explained as denoting "Sabbataï Zevi" being nothing less than a mystic allusion to Jesus Christ! The Chief Rabbi of Altona and Hamburg was at heart attached to the Christian Faith, so Megerlin maintained, but he dared not come forward openly through fear of the Jews. He himself, it is true, and his disciple, Charles Antony, had explained these amulets in quite another way, and not in a Christian sense; but the latter had not comprehended the deeper meaning, and Eibeschütz had composed his vindication only for the Polish Jews. In his heart of hearts the Chief Rabbi was a true believer in Christianity. Megerlin, therefore, called on the King of Denmark to protect Eibeschütz against the persecutions of the Jews, and especially to shield him from the calumnies of Jacob Emden, who hated and persecuted the Christians, as his father had persecuted Chayon, who also was secretly a Christian. In his folly Megerlin exhorted Eibeschütz most earnestly to throw off the mask, to resign the post of Rabbi of the Three Communities, and to allow himself to be baptized. He also addressed a circular letter to the Jews, urging them to arrange a general convention of Rabbis and openly to glorify Christianity. Had Eibeschütz possessed a spark of honour he would have been forced, even at the risk of losing the king's favour, to repudiate the



conviction attributed to him, of secretly believing in Christianity. But he did not take the smallest step to answer this charge of hypocrisy; he was content to profit by it. Megerlin's arguments, foolish as they were, convinced King Frederick. He revoked the suspension of office with which Eibeschütz was threatened, and decreed that the Jews of the Altona community should show him obedience. The Senate of Hamburg, also, again acknowledged him as Rabbi of the German community. Eibeschütz exulted, and his admirers prepared a solemn triumph for him (Chanucah—middle of December, 1756). His disciples, clad as knights, marched through the streets shouting, till they reached the Rabbi's house, where they performed a dance of delight. The six years of strife which had aroused every evil passion among the Jews, from Lorraine to Podolia, and from the Elbe to the Po, ended apparently in a dance. But at the same time Eibeschütz suffered defeat in another direction; he was branded in the eyes of those who had hitherto spoken favourably of him and supported him.

At all events, the facts flatly contradicted his assertion, put forward through his mouthpiece, Charles Antony, that "there were no longer any Sabbatians." They raised their serpents' heads and shot forth their tongues full of poisonous rage at this very moment. The seed which Chayim Malach had scattered in Poland was not long checked in its growth by the anathemas of the Rabbis. They had only forced the Sabbatians to disguise themselves better, and to counterfeit death; but they flourished secretly and their following increased. Some towns in Podolia and Pakotia were full of Talmudists who, like the Sabbatians, scoffed at the Talmud, rejected the law of Judaism, and, under the mask of ascetic discipline, lived impure lives. The disorders to which the dispute

regarding Eibeschütz had given rise in Poland encouraged the Polish Sabbatians to venture from their hiding-places and to raise their masks a little. The time seemed to them favourable for an attempt to cast aside the religious ritual which was odious to them and openly to come forward as anti-Talmudists. They needed, however, a spirited leader who should gather together the scattered band, give them cohesion, and mark out a line of action. This leader now presented himself, and with his appearance began a new movement which threw the whole Jewish world of Poland into intense agitation and despair. This leader was the notorious Jacob Frank.

Jankiev Lejbovicz (that is, Jacob son of Leb) of Galicia, was one of the worst, most subtle, and most deceitful rascals of the eighteenth century. He could cheat the most sagacious, and veil his frauds so cleverly that after his death many still believed him to be an admirable man, who bore through life, and carried with him to the grave, most weighty secrets. He understood the art of deception even in his youth, and boasted later how he had duped his own father. As a young man he travelled in Turkey in the service of a Jewish gentleman, and in Salonica entered into relations with the Sabbatians or Jewish Moslems there. If he did not also learn from them how to work deceptive and mystifying miracles, he at all events learnt indifference towards all forms of religion. He became a Turk, and afterwards a Catholic, for so long as it served his purpose, and changed his religion as one changes one's clothes. From his long sojourn in Turkey he acquired the name of Frank or Frenk. Though ignorant of Talmudical literature, as he himself confessed, he was initiated in the Zoharist Kabbala, interpreted it himself, and took pleasure in the doctrine of metempsychosis, by virtue of which the successive Messiahs became not vision-

aries or impostors, but the embodiment of one and the same Messianic soul. King David, Elijah, Jesus, Mahomet, Sabbataï Zevi and his imitators, down to Berachya, were merely one and the same personality, which had assumed different bodily forms. Why should not he himself be another incarnation of the Messiah? Although Jacob Frank, or Lejbovicz, loved money very dearly, he nevertheless accounted it only as a lever by which to raise himself; he wished to play a brilliant part and surround himself with a mysterious halo of glory. Circumstances were exceptionally favourable to him. He married in Nicopolis (Turkey) a very beautiful wife, through whom he attracted followers. He collected by degrees a small number of Turkish and Wallachian Jews, who shared his loose principles and held him to be a superior being—the latest embodiment of the Messiah. He could not, however, carry on his mischievous schemes in Turkey, where he was persecuted.

Frank appears to have obtained intelligence of the schism which had arisen in Poland through the disorder caused by the Eibeschutz controversy, and thought that he might utilise the propitious moment to gather round him the Sabbatians of Podolia, and play a part among them, and by means of them. He came suddenly amongst them, visited many towns of Podolia and the Lemberg district, where secret Sabbatians resided, with whom he may have been previously in communication. They fell, so to speak, into his arms. Frank needed followers, and they were seeking for a leader, and now they found one who had come to them with a full purse, of the contents of which he was not sparing. In a trice he had won the Sabbatians of Podolia. Frank disclosed himself to them as the successor of Sabbataï, or, what was the same thing, as the new-born soul of the Sabbatian chief, Berachya. What this manifestation should signify was known to the



initiated among them. They understood by it the blasphemous and at the same time absurd theory of a kind of Trinity, consisting of the Holy and Most Ancient One, of the Holy King, and of a feminine Person in the Godhead. Frank, like his predecessors, attributed the chief importance to the Holy King, who was at the same time Messiah and the incorporated Godhead, and possessed all power on Earth and in Heaven. Frank ordered his followers to address him as the Holy Lord. In virtue of his participation in the Godhead, the Messiah was able to do all things and to work miracles. Frank also performed miracles, as his followers afterwards maintained. The adherents whom he brought in his train and whom he gathered round him in Poland believed so strongly in his divine nature that they addressed to him mystic prayers in the language of the Zohar, with the same formulas that the Donmäh of Salonica were wont to address to Jacob Querido and Berachya. In short, Frank formed a sect of his own from the Sabbatians of Podolia, called by his name "Frankists." Their founder taught his chief disciples to acquire riches for themselves, even by fraudulent and dishonest means. Deceit was nothing more than skilful artifice. Their chief task was to undermine Rabbinical Judaism, and to oppose and annihilate the Talmud. This task they undertook with a passion which perhaps owed its origin to the constraints imposed upon them through fear of persecution. The Frankists opposed the Zohar to the Talmud, and Simon bar Yochai, its nominal author, to the remaining supporters of the Talmud, as though in earlier times the former had combated the latter and actually accused them of being the falsifiers of Judaism. The Zohar alone contained the true teaching of Moses, which had declared the whole of Rabbinical Judaism to be on a lower level—a fact which the blundering Kabbalists so long

overlooked. The Frankists perceived more accurately the half-concealed secrets of the book of the Zohar. They rightly called themselves as much Zoharites as anti-Talmudists. With a certain childish frowardness they did exactly those things which Rabbinical Judaism strongly prohibited, and neglected those which the latter proscribed, not only in points of ritual, but also with regard to marriage and the laws of chastity. Among these anti-Talmudic Frankists were also found Rabbis and so-called preachers (Darshanim, Maggidim), Jehuda Leb Krysa, Rabbi of Nadvorna, and Rabbi Nachman ben Samuel Levi of Busk. Of especial reputation among the Polish Sabbatians was Elisha Schor of Rohatyn, an already aged man, who was descended from distinguished Polish Rabbis. He, his sons, his daughter Chaya (who knew the Zohar by heart, and was considered a prophetess), his grandson, and sons-in-law were from an early period all thorough-going Sabbatians, to whom it was a positive pleasure to deride the Rabbinical precepts.

Meanwhile Frank, during the first months after his return to Poland, held secret conferences with the anti-Talmudists of Podolia, as a public demonstration might be attended with danger. One day, however, he was surprised with about twenty of his followers in Laskorun in a conventicle. The Frankists declared that they had merely been singing certain psalms in the Zohar language. Their adversaries, however, asserted that they had been performing an indecent dance around a half-naked woman, and kissing her. Many gathered about the inn to force their way in; others ran to the police to give information that a Turk had stolen into Podolia to try and pervert the Jews to the Mahometan religion and make them emigrate to Turkey, and that those who had joined him were leading an Adamite, that is to say dissolute life. The police immediately interposed,

broke open the barricaded doors, and expelled the Frankists. Frank was dismissed next day as being a foreigner, and repaired to the neighbouring Turkish territory; and the Podolian Frankists were kept in custody. The incident made a sensation, and was perhaps intentionally exaggerated. Like wild-fire the news concerning the Sabbatians spread. It can be imagined what this defiance of Rabbinical Judaism, especially in Poland, meant in those days, where the most insignificant religious rites were sedulously observed. It was now discovered that, in the midst of the excessive piety which characterised the Poles, a number of persons, brought up in the knowledge of the Talmud, scoffed at the whole system of Rabbinical Judaism. The Rabbis and elders forthwith began to employ the usual weapons of excommunication and persecution against the offenders, and the secret heretics were hunted out. Won over by large sums, the Polish authorities energetically supported the persecutors. Those who were in a serious position showed signs of repentance and made public confession of their misdeeds, which, whether they be accurate or exaggerated, present a sad picture of the deterioration of the Polish Jews. Before the Council of Rabbis in Satanov, in open court, several men and women stated that they and their friends had not only treated the rites of Judaism with contempt, but had abandoned themselves to fornication, adultery, incest and other iniquities, and had done so in accordance with the teachings of Kabbalistic mysticism. The penitents also declared that Frank had wrongly taught his followers to scoff at chastity.

In consequence of this evidence a solemn sentence of excommunication, at which burning tapers were extinguished, was pronounced in Brody against the Frankists; no one might intermarry with them, their sons and daughters were to be treated as bastards born in adultery, and none who were



even suspected could be admitted to the post of Rabbi, to any religious office, or to the profession of teacher. Every one was in duty bound to denounce and unmask the secret Sabbatians. This excommunication was repeated in several communities and finally ratified by a great Synod in Konstantinov on the Jewish New Year (Sept., 1756). The final document was printed, published, and ordered to be read aloud every month in the synagogues for observance. This sentence of excommunication contained one point of great importance. No one under thirty years of age was to be permitted to study the Kabbala. Thus necessity at length opened the eyes of the Rabbis to the recognition of the impure spring, which since the time of Lurya had poisoned the sap of the tree of Judaism. In their blindness, by condemning philosophy and by dallying with mysticism, they imagined that they were strengthening Judaism in placing folly on the throne of wisdom. This course produced that book of lies, the Zohar, which impudently set itself above the Holy Writings and the Talmud. Finally, the delusions of the Kabbala declared war for life and death against Rabbinical Judaism. Such were the fruits of blindness. The members of the Synod of Konstantinov turned for advice in their perplexity to Jacob Emden, who, since his controversy with Eibeschutz, was accounted the representative of sound orthodoxy. He, too, thus enjoyed a triumph, though of an altogether different kind from the one his antagonist was at the same time celebrating in the midst of his noisy admirers. The Polish Jews at last began to be aware that secular knowledge and cultivated eloquence are after all not altogether objectionable, since they can render assistance to Judaism. They were desirous that a cultured Portuguese should come to Poland, endowed with knowledge and readiness of speech, who should represent them before the Polish

magistracy and clergy, in order to suppress the dangerous sect of the Frankists.

Jacob Emden, who was deeply affected by the despairing appeal of his Polish brethren, likewise came to a conclusion, which was of great importance for succeeding ages. The Sabbatians of all denominations appealed to the Zohar as a Sacred authority, as the Bible of a new revelation, excusing all their blasphemies and indecencies by quotations from it. What if the Zohar should prove not to be genuine, but only a supposititious work? And this was the conclusion to which Emden came. The repulsive incidents in Poland first suggested the inquiry to him, and it became clear to him that at least a portion of the Zohar was the production of an impostor.

To the question whether it would be lawful to persecute the Frankists, Jacob Emden answered emphatically in the affirmative. He held them, according to the accounts received from Poland, to be shameless transgressors of the most sacred laws of decency and chastity who, by means of mystical dissimulation, made a virtue of vice. No persuasion however was required from him; when persecution became necessary in Poland the will to inflict it was never wanting. The Frankists were denounced to the magistracy and clergy as a new sect and handed over to the Catholic Inquisition, and the Bishop of Kamieniec, Nicholas Dembowski, in whose diocese they were apprehended, had no objection to erect a stake. Frank was cunning enough, however, to avert from his followers the blow aimed at them and to direct it against their enemies. From Chocim, where after a brief imprisonment he had settled in safety, he counselled them to insist on two points of defence; that they believed in a Trinity, and that they rejected the Talmud as a compilation full of error and blasphemy. He then secretly assembled some of his followers at

a small market town in Poland and reiterated his advice, with the addition that twenty or thirty of them must quickly be baptised in order to give more emphasis to their assertions that they acknowledged the Trinity and rejected the Talmud. To Frank it was a very small matter to change his religion. The Jews of the district who were believers in the Talmud had meanwhile heard of Frank's secret conference with his confederates, collected a band, attacked them, and after using them roughly placed them in confinement. This proceeding provoked the anti-Talmudists to revenge themselves on their enemies. They would not indeed be baptised, but they declared before the tribunal of Bishop Dembowski that they were *almost* Christians, that they believed in a Divine Trinity, that the rest of the Jews, whom they themselves repudiated, did not hold the true faith, and that they were persecuted on account of their own superiority. In order to make their breach with Judaism quite unmistakable, or in order to revenge themselves in a very sanguinary way on their opponents, they made false accusations, namely, that believers in the Talmud made use of the blood of Christians, and that the Talmud itself inculcated the murder of Christians as a sacred duty. There was no difficulty in trumping up evidence in favour of the accusation! It was only necessary that some Christian child should be missing. Something of the kind had occurred in Jampol in Podolia (April, 1756), and immediately all the most respectable Jews of the town were placed in chains, and the other communities were likewise menaced. Bishop Dembowski and his chapter, rejoiced to make such a capture, favoured the Frankists in every way in consequence of their false evidence, freed them from prison, protected them from persecution, allowed them to settle in the diocese of Kamieniec, permitted them to live as they pleased, and were delighted to foster their hatred of the



Talmudist Jews. The bishop flattered himself that, through the Frankists, among whom were several Rabbis, he would be able to convert many Polish Jews to Catholicism. The new sect passed in the province from a persecuted into a persecuting one.

In order to drive their adversaries to desperation, the Frankists (1757) petitioned Bishop Dembowski to arrange a disputation between themselves and the Talmudists, and bound themselves to prove both their belief in the doctrine of the Trinity and the harmful nature of the Talmud, from the Scriptures and the Zohar. To this the bishop very willingly consented. One of the Frankist Rabbis—perhaps old Elisha Schor, of Rohatyn—therefore composed a confession of faith, which, almost unequalled for audacity and untruthfulness, is at the same time sufficiently vague in its explanation of the Sabbatian and Kabbalistic doctrines to lead the bishop to suppose that these were in consonance with the Catholic Faith, and to drive their adversaries into a corner. The Frankist Confession of Faith contains nine articles. The religion revealed by God to man contains so many deep mysteries, that it must be thoroughly searched out and examined; without a higher inspiration, however, it cannot be understood at all. One of these mysteries is that the Godhead consists of three Persons, equal to one another, which at the same time form a Trinity and Unity. Another mystery is that the Godhead may assume human form in order to manifest itself visibly to all men. These deities incarnate accomplish for mankind, through their mediation, redemption and salvation—and not the Messiah, who was expected to assemble the Jews and lead them back to Jerusalem. The latter is a false belief: Jerusalem and the Temple will never be rebuilt. The Talmud, indeed, interprets the revealed faith otherwise;

but this belief is quite contrary to reason, and has led the Talmudists, its adherents, into error and unbelief. The Talmud especially contains most atrocious statements: such as that the Jews were permitted to betray and slay Christians—indeed, were obliged to do so. The Zohar, which is diametrically opposed to the Talmud, offers the sole rightful and true interpretation of the Holy Writings. All these absurd statements, the written confession of faith of the Frankists, were supported by passages from the Bible and the Zohar; and in order to vilify the Talmud, passages in it were intentionally misrepresented. The Zohar was printed and published in the Hebrew and Polish languages. The representatives of the Polish community—the Synod of Four Countries—were painfully sensible, in their desperate situation, of their own want of education. They could not produce a single man who could expose the imposture of the Frankists and the hollowness of their creed in well-turned or even in tolerable language. The proud leaders of the Synod, in their anxiety therefore behaved just like children. They helplessly devised extravagant schemes, wished to appeal to the Pope, and to incite the Portuguese in Amsterdam and Rome to protect them from the machinations of their vindictive enemies.

Bishop Dembowski consented to the proposition of the Frankists, and issued a command that the Talmudists should send deputies to a Disputation at Kamieniec, failing which he would punish them and burn the Talmud as a book contrary to Christianity. In vain did the Polish Jews appeal to their ancient privileges, screen themselves behind great nobles, and spend large sums of money; all was of no avail. They were obliged to prepare for the Disputation and to render an account to the enemies they had so greatly despised. Only a few

Rabbis however appeared. And what too could the representatives of the Talmud, with their profound ignorance and halting speech, effect against the audacious denunciations of the Frankists, particularly as they also acknowledged the Zohar as a sacred book, and this, as a matter of fact, supported the doctrine of a kind of Trinity! What happened at the Disputation of Kamieniec has never transpired. The Talmudists were accounted as vanquished and refuted. Bishop Dembowski publicly declared (14th Oct., 1757), that, as the anti-Talmudists had set down in writing and proved the chief points of their Confession of Faith, it was permitted to them everywhere to hold disputations with the Talmudists. Copies of the Talmud were ordered to be confiscated, brought to Kamieniec, and there publicly burned by the hangman. Dembowski was permitted, of his own free will, to favour the one party and condemn the other. The King of Poland and his Minister, Count Bruhl, troubled themselves but little as to internal affairs, and still less about the Jews. Hence Dembowski, who about that time had been made Archbishop of Lemberg, was allowed with the aid of the clergy, the police and the Frankists, to search for copies of the Talmud and other Rabbinical writings in the towns of his bishopric, collect them at Kamieniec and publicly ridicule the books by dragging them through the streets. Only the Bible and the Zohar were to be spared, as in the time of the persecution of the Talmud under Popes Julius IV. and Pius V. A thousand copies of the Talmud were thrown into a great pit at Kamieniec and burnt by the hangman. The Talmudists could do nothing in return; they could only groan, weep, and proclaim a rigorous fast-day on account of "The burning of the Torah." It was the Kabbala that had kindled the torches for the funeral pile of the Talmud. The clergy, in conjunction with the anti-Talmudists, daily made



domiciliary visits into Jewish houses to confiscate copies of the Talmud.

To free themselves and all other Jews from the oft repeated, and as often refuted, accusation of child-murder, which the abject Frankists had confirmed, the Jewish Talmudists sent Eliakim Selig (Selek) as a deputy to Benedictus XIV., in order to procure an official exposure of the falsehood of the charge brought against Jews. Eliakim's determination and persistence succeeded in obtaining this authoritative acquittal in Rome at the end of 1757.

Suddenly Bishop Dembowski died (17th Nov., 1757) of a violent death, and this led to a new development in the controversy. The persecutions against the Talmudists immediately ceased, and the energies of the authorities were now directed against the Frankists. The Frankists were from that time persecuted, imprisoned, and declared outlaws. Their beards were cut off as a mark of disgrace, and to make them more recognizable. The majority of those who could no longer maintain themselves in Kamieniec fled to the neighbouring province of Bessarabia. The Frankists, however, found but little rest under Turkish jurisdiction. Their persecutors informed the Jewish community of the arrival of the anti-Talmudists in their district and of their antagonism to Judaism, and the former had only to notify to the Pasha and the Cadi that these supposed Polish Jews were not under the protection of the Chacham Bashi (Chief Rabbi) of Constantinople in order to invite the Turks to fall upon the new comers and mercilessly rob and ill-treat them. So the Frankists wandered restlessly round the boundaries of Podolia and Bessarabia in despair as to what would be the result. At length they addressed themselves to the King of Poland, and implored him to confirm the privilege granted to them by Bishop Dembowski that their worship should be tolerated. Augustus

III., the victim and martyr of the seven years' war, thereupon issued a decree (11th June, 1758) that the Frankists should return unmolested to their homes, and should reside in Poland wherever they pleased. This decree had not the desired effect, and the Frankists were still continually persecuted by their opponents with the aid of the nobles. In their trouble some of their body prayed to Frank, who had so long forsaken them, to assist them with his advice. While affecting to demur, he willingly obeyed their call and repaired again to Podolia (Jan., 1759).

With his appearance the old game of intrigue began once more. Frank was from that time the life and soul of his followers, and without his commands or hints they could undertake nothing. He saw clearly that the hypocrisy of simply declaring that the anti-Talmudists believed in the Trinity must not be repeated, and that they must make some further approach towards Christianity. By his advice six Frankists, of whom the majority were foreigners, repaired to Wratislav Lubienski, the Archbishop of Lemberg, with the declaration (20th Feb., 1759), "in the name of their whole body," that they were all desirous, under certain conditions, of being baptised. In their petition they used phrases savouring of Catholicism, and breathed vengeance against their former co-religionists. Lubienski ordered this petition of the Zoharites to be printed, in order, on the one hand, to proclaim the victory of the Church, and on the other to keep the members of this sect to their word, but he did nothing for them. Although in their Catholic and Kabbalistic language they declared that they languished for baptism "like the hart for the waterbrooks," they did not in the least contemplate an immediate formal secession to Christianity. Frank their leader, whom they blindly followed, did not consider the time ripe for proceeding further in

the matter. He desired through this last move to seek for favourable terms, and he deputed two friends to draw up an address to the King and Archbishop Lubienski (16th May, 1759). He and his seconders insisted especially on a disputation with their opponents. They adduced, as a reason, that they wished thereby to show the world that they were led to embrace Christianity, not from necessity and poverty, but through inward convictions. They wished, moreover, to give an opportunity to their secret confederates of publicly avowing themselves as believers in Christianity, which they would infallibly do if their righteous cause should triumph in public argument. Finally, they hoped in this way to open the blinded eyes of their antagonists. To this cunningly devised<sup>1</sup> and malicious petition against their enemies, the king made no reply while Lubienski, evading their demands, answered that he could only promise them eternal salvation if they allowed themselves to be baptised; all the rest would follow as a matter of course. He displayed no zeal whatever for the conversion of these ragged fellows whom he believed to be dissemblers. The Papal Nuncio in Warsaw, Nicholas Serra, did not regard with favour the idea of the conversion of the anti-Talmudists.

The position of affairs changed, however, when Lubienski withdrew to Gnesen, his arch-episcopal seat, and the Administrator and canon of the archbishopric of Lemberg, De Mikulski, showed more zeal for conversion. He immediately promised the Frankists to arrange a religious conference between them and the Talmudists if they would exhibit a sincere desire for baptism. On this the deputies, Leb Krysa and Solomon of Rohatyn, in the name of the whole body, made a Catholic confession of faith (25th May), which savoured of Kabbalism: "that the cross is the symbol of the Holy Trinity and the seal of the Messiah." It closed in these



words, that "the Talmud teaches the use of the blood of Christians, and whosoever believes in it is bound to use this blood." Thereupon Mikulski, without consulting the Papal Nuncio Serra, made arrangements for a second disputation in Lemberg (June, 1759). The Rabbis of this diocese were summoned to appear, under pain of a heavy fine, and the nobility and clergy were requested in case of necessity to compel them to come forward. The Nuncio Serra, to whom the Talmudists complained, was in the highest degree dissatisfied with the idea of the disputation, but did not like to prevent it because he wished to learn with certainty whether the Jews really used the blood of Christians. This appeared to him the most important point of all. Just at this time Pope Clement XIII. had communicated a favourable answer on this question to the Jewish deputy Jelek. Clement XIII. proclaimed to all men that the Holy See had examined and discussed the grounds on which the belief in the use of human blood for the Feast of the Passover and the murder of Christians on the part of Jews was supported, and that the Jews must not be condemned as criminals in respect of this charge, but that in the case of such occurrences legal forms of proof must be used. Notwithstanding this, the Papal envoy at this very time, deceived by the meanness of the Frankists, partially credited the false accusation, and notified it to the Curia.

The religious conference which was to lead to the conversion of so many Jews, at first regarded with indifference, began to awaken interest. The Polish nobility of both sexes purchased entrance cards at a high price, the proceeds of which should go to the poor people who were to be baptised. On the appointed day the Talmudists and Zoharites were brought into the Cathedral of Lemberg; all the clergy, nobility and burghers crowded thither to

witness the spectacle of Jews, apparently belonging to the same religion, hurling at each other accusations of the most abominable crimes. At the bottom of the whole quarrel were the Talmud and the Kabala, formerly a closely united pair of sisters, who had fallen out with one another. The disputation failed miserably in its results. Of the Frankists, who had boastfully given out that several hundreds of their party would attend, only some ten appeared, the rest being too poor to undertake the long journey and to attire themselves decently. Of the Talmudists forty were present owing to their dread of the threatened fine. How Judaism had retrograded in the century of "enlightenment" when compared with the thirteenth century! At that time, on a similar occasion, the spokesman of the Jews, Moses Nachmani, proudly confronted his opponents at the Court of Barcelona and almost made them quake by his knowledge and firmness. In Lemberg the representatives of Talmudic Judaism stood awkward and disconcerted, unable to utter a word. They did not even understand the language of the country—their opponents, to be sure, were in like case—and interpreters had to be employed. But the Catholic clergy in Poland and the learned classes on this occasion also betrayed their astounding ignorance. Not a single Pole understood Hebrew or the language of the Rabbis sufficiently to be an impartial witness as to the merits of the dispute, whilst in Germany and Holland Christian professors acquainted with Hebrew could be counted by hundreds. The Talmudists had a difficult part to play in this religious conference. The chief thesis of the Frankists was that the Zohar teaches the doctrine of the Trinity, and that one Person of the Godhead became incarnate. Could they dare to call this dogma seriously in question without wounding the feelings of the Christians their masters? And that such utterances were to

be found in the Zohar they could not deny. Of course they might have refuted most completely the false charge of using the blood of Christian children and of the bloodthirsty nature of the Talmud, or have appealed to the testimony of Christians and even to the decision of the Pope. They were however, ignorant of the history of their own suffering, and their ignorance avenged itself on them. It is easy to believe that the Talmudic spokesmen, after the three days' conference, returned home ashamed and overwhelmed. Even the imputation of shedding Christian blood continued to cling to their religion.

The Zoharites who had obtained their desire were now strongly urged by the clergy to perform their promise, and allow themselves to be baptised. But they continued to resist as if it had cost them a great struggle, and only yielded at the express command of their chief, Frank, and in his presence. The latter appeared in great pomp in magnificent Turkish robes, with a team of six horses, and surrounded by guards also in Turkish dress. He wished to appear imposing to the Poles. His was the strong will which led the Frankists, and which they implicitly obeyed. Some thousand Zoharites in all were baptised on this occasion. Frank alone would not be baptised in Lemberg, but appeared suddenly, with dazzling magnificence, in Warsaw (Oct., 1759), aroused the curiosity of the Polish capital, and requested the favour that the king would stand godfather to him. The newspapers of the Polish capital were full of accounts of the daily baptisms of so many Jews, and of the names of the great nobles and ladies who were their godparents. But the Church did not rejoice over this victory. Frank was, on the contrary, watched with suspicion by the clergy. They did not trust him, and divined in him a swindler who under the mask of Christianity, as formerly under that of Islam, desired to play a



part as the leader of a sect. The more Frank reiterated the demand that a special tract of country should be assigned to him, the more did he arouse the suspicion that he was pursuing his own self interested aims, and that baptism was to him but a means to an end. The Talmudic Jews neglected nothing that could furnish proofs of his extravagant projects. At length he was unmasked and betrayed by some of his Polish followers, who were incensed at being neglected by him for the foreign Frankists, and showed that with him the belief in Christianity was but a farce, and that he had commanded his followers to address him as Messiah and God Incarnate and Holy Lord. He was arrested and examined before the President of the Polish Inquisition as an impostor and a blasphemer. The depositions of the witnesses still more clearly revealed his frauds, and he was conveyed to the fortress of Czenstochow and confined in a convent (March, 1760). Only the fact that the king was his godfather saved Frank from being burnt at the stake as a heretic and apostate. His chief followers were likewise arrested and thrown into prison. The rank and file were in part condemned to work on the fortifications of Czenstochow and partly outlawed. Many Frankists were obliged to beg for alms at the church doors, and were treated with contempt by the Polish population. They continued true, however, to their Messiah or Holy Lord. All adverse events they accounted for in the Kabbalistic manner: they had been divinely predestined. The cloister of Czenstochow they named mystically, "The gate of Rome." Outwardly they adhered to the Catholic religion, and joined in all the sacraments, but they associated only with each other, and like their Turkish comrades, the Donmäh, they intermarried only with each other. The families descended from them in Poland, Wolowski, Zembowski, Dzalski, are still at the

present day known as Franks or Schäbs. Frank was set at liberty by the Russians, after thirteen years' imprisonment in the fortress, performed the part of an impostor for over twenty years on other stages in Vienna, Pomona, and at last in Offenbach; he set up his beautiful daughter Eva as the incarnate Godhead, and deceived the world until the end of his life, and even after his death; but with this part of his career Jewish history has nothing to do.

For all these calamitous events, Jonathan Eibeschutz was in some measure to blame. The Frankists regarded him, the great Gaon, as one of themselves, and he did nothing to clear himself from the stigma of this suspicion. He was implored to relieve the trouble of the Polish Jews, to make his influence felt in refuting the charge of the use of Christian blood. He remained silent, as if he feared to provoke the Frankists against him. Some of his followers who had formerly warmly upheld him began to distrust him, among them Ezekiel Landau, at that time already chief Rabbi of Prague. Jacob Emden had won the day, he could flourish over him the scourge of his scorn; and he pursued him even beyond the grave as the most abandoned being who had ever disgraced Judaism. The Rabbinate had placed itself in the pillory, and undermined its own authority. But it thereby loosened the soil from which a better seed could spring forth.

Whilst Eibeschutz and his opponents were squabbling over amulets and Sabbatian heresy, and Jacob Frank Lejbowicz was carrying on his Zoharistic frauds, Mendelssohn and Lessing were cementing a league of friendship, Portugal was extinguishing its funeral fires for the Marranos, and in England the question of the emancipation of the Jews was being seriously discussed in Parliament.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MENDELSSOHN EPOCH.

Renaissance of the Jewish Race—Moses Mendelssohn—His Youth—Improves the Hebrew Style—Lessing and Mendelssohn—Mendelssohn's Writings—The Bonnet-Lavater Controversy—Kölbele—The Burial Question—Reimarus—Anonymous Publication of his Work—Lessing's "Nathan the Wise"—Mendelssohn in "Nathan"—Mendelssohn's Pentateuch—Opposition to it—The "Berlin Religion"—Montesquieu—Voltaire—Portuguese Marranos in Bordeaux—Isaac Pinto—His Defence of Portuguese Jews—Dohm and Mendelssohn—Joseph II. of Austria—Michaelis—Mendelssohn's "Jerusalem"—Wessely: his Circular Letter—Mendelssohn's Death.

1750—1786.

"CAN a people be born in one day"—or can a nation be regenerated? If the laboriously constructed organism of a nation has lost its vitality, the bonds connecting the individual parts are weakened, and internal dissolution has set in, the volition which mechanically binds the members together being wanting; in short, if death comes upon a commonalty in its corporate state, and it has been entombed, can it ever be resuscitated and undergo a revival? Such a final doom has overtaken many nationalities of ancient and modern times. But if in such a people a new birth should take place, *i.e.*, a resurrection from death and apparent decomposition, and if this should occur in a race long past its youthful vigour, and whose history has spread over thousands of years,—then such a miracle deserves the most attentive consideration from every man who does not stolidly overlook what is marvellous.

The Jewish race has displayed miraculous phe-



nomena, not only in ancient days, the age of miracles, but also in this matter-of-fact epoch. A community which was an object of mockery not merely to the malicious and ignorant, but even to benevolent and cultured men; which seemed despicable in its own eyes, and only preserved its self-respect through its domestic virtues and ancient memories, both of which, however, owing to their surroundings, had become disfigured and defaced almost beyond recognition. A community which scourged itself with bitter irony, and of which one well acquainted with its inner constitution could remark, "My nation has become so estranged from culture, that it is doubtful whether there is any possibility of improvement"—this community nevertheless again raised itself from the dust! It revived with marvellous rapidity from its state of abjection, as if a Prophet had called unto it, "Arise, arise, shake thyself from the dust, loose thyself from the bands of thy fetters, O captive daughter of Zion!" And who caused this revival? One man, Moses Mendelssohn, who might be considered as the incarnation of the history of his race—a person stunted in form, awkward, timid, stuttering, ugly and repulsive in appearance. But within this deformed figure there breathed a thoughtful spirit, which only when misled pursued chimeras, and only lost its self-esteem when proscribed. No sooner however did it understand that it was the exponent of the truth, than it forthwith dismissed its visionary fancies, its spirit began to reanimate the body, to raise the bent form erect, to drop its hateful characteristics, and to transform the scornful nickname of "Jew" into a title of honour.

This rejuvenescence or renaissance of the Jewish race, which may be unhesitatingly ascribed to Mendelssohn, is noteworthy, inasmuch as the originator of this great work had no anticipation or even

suspicion of its near success; in fact, as already remarked, he almost doubted the capability of his brethren to bring about this new birth. He produced this altogether unpremeditated glorious result, not by means of his profession or his public position. He was not a preacher in the desert, who summoned the lost sons of Israel to a change of mind; all his life he kept himself secluded, and avoided every intentional display of influence. Even when sought after, he declined the leadership, with the oft repeated confession, that he was in no way fitted for the office. Mendelssohn played an influential part without either knowing or desiring it: involuntarily, he aroused the slumbering genius of the Jewish race, which only required an impulse to free itself from its constrained position and to develop. The story of his life is therefore all the more interesting, because it typifies the history of the Jews in recent times, when they raised themselves from their dejected and contemptible state to one of greatness and self-consciousness.

Moses Mendelssohn (born at Dessau, August, 1728, died in Berlin 4th January, 1786) was as insignificant and wretched an object as were almost all poor Jewish children. At this time children seemed even in their infancy to possess a servile appearance. For boys just aroused to the interest of living there was no period of youth; they were early made to shiver and shake by the icy breath of a rough life. They were thus prematurely awakened to think, and hardened for their struggle with the unlovely reality. One day Mendelssohn, a weakly deformed lad barely in his fourteenth year, knocked at a door in the gates of Berlin. A Jewish porter, a sort of policeman, the terror of immigrant Jews, and who was ordered to refuse admission to the city to such as were without means of subsistence, replied harshly to

the pale, crippled boy who asked for admission. Fortunately, he bashfully managed to stammer out that he desired to enrol himself among the Talmudical pupils of the new Rabbi of Berlin. This was a kind of recommendation, and enabled him to dispense with a full purse. Mendelssohn was admitted, and directed his steps towards the house of the Rabbi, David Fränkel, his countryman and teacher, and who had shortly before been called from Dessau to the Rabbinate of Berlin.

He admitted the shy little pupil, allowed him to attend his Rabbinical lectures, provided for his maintenance, and employed him in copying his Commentary to the Jerusalem Talmud, because Mendelssohn had inherited from his father, a writer of scrolls of the Law, a talent for beautiful handwriting, his only legacy. Even if Mendelssohn learnt from Fränkel nothing besides the Talmud, yet the latter exerted a favourable influence upon the mind of his disciple, because his method of instruction, like ploughing a fallow tract of land, was not so distorted, hair-splitting and perverse as that of most expounders of the Talmud, who made the crooked straight, and the straight crooked. Mendelssohn's innate love of order and yearning for truth were not suppressed or hindered by his first teacher, and this was also of some value.

Like the majority of Talmudical pupils (Bachurim) Mendelssohn led a life of poverty, which the Talmud to some extent made a stipulation for study:—

“Bread with salt shalt thou eat, water by measure shalt thou drink, upon the hard earth shalt thou sleep, and a life of anxiousness shalt thou live, and labour in the study of the Law.”

His ideal at this time went no further than to perfect himself in the knowledge of the Talmud. Was it an accident that implanted in Berlin the seed destined to produce such luxuriant fruit? Or



would the result have been the same, if he had remained with Fränkel in Dessau, or if the latter had been called to Halberstadt, or Fürth, or Metz, or Frankfort? It is difficult to say. However retired was Mendelssohn's mode of life, yet a fresh breeze was wafted from the capital of Prussia into the narrow chambers of his Rabbinical studies. With the accession of Frederick the Great, who besides war also cultivated the Muses, (though in a French garb), literary studies, French customs and contempt for religion began to grow into fashion. Although the condition of the Jews under Frederick was a restricted one, yet, when several of them became wealthy, the new spirit, one-sided and superficial as it was, did not pass over them without leaving its impression. An impulse towards culture, love of innovation and the imitation of Christian habits began to manifest itself.

A Pole first introduced Mendelssohn to the philosophical works of Maimuni, who for him and through him became a "Guide to the Perplexed." The spirit of the great Jewish thinker, whose ashes had lain in Palestine for more than five hundred years, came upon the young Mendelssohn, inspired him with fresh thoughts, and made him, as it were, his Elisha. What signified to Mendelssohn the long interval of many centuries? He listened to the words of Maimuni, as if sitting at his feet, and imbibed his wise instruction in deep draughts. He read this book again and again, until he became bent by constant perusal of its pages. From the Pole, Israel Zamosc, he also learned mathematics and logic, and from Gumpertz a liking for good literature. Mendelssohn learned to spell and to philosophise at the same time, and received only defective assistance in both studies. He principally taught and educated himself. He steeled himself to be a strong character, tamed his passions, and accustomed him-

self, even before he knew what wisdom was, to live according to her rules. In this system also Maimuni was his instructor. By nature Mendelssohn was violent and hot-tempered; but he taught himself to have such complete self-mastery that, like a second Hillel, he became distinguished for his meekness and gentleness.

As if Mendelssohn knew that it was his mission to purify the morals and to elevate the minds of his brethren, he, whilst still a pupil, joined a Hebrew newspaper, which had been started by some men of kindred mind, for the purpose of ennobling the Jews. The first product of his intellect grew forth like succulent grass in the early spring. It was no more the ossified, distorted and over-embellished Hebrew style of his contemporaries, which had disfigured the Hebrew language into becoming the mere mumbling of a decrepit tongue. Fresh and clear as a mountain-stream, the Hebrew outpourings of Mendelssohn welled forth. The basis of ideas in his first-fruits was philosophical religion, in which he desired not only to depict trust in God, and the inefficacy of evil, but also the rejuvenescence of Nature in its vesture of spring, and the delight of the pure mind of man at this beautiful change. The school of suffering through which he had passed for so many years, instead of dragging him down, had awakened, elevated and ennobled his spirit. This mode of gaining a livelihood ceased when he obtained the not over-lucrative situation as teacher in a rich family (that of Isaac Bernard); but it sufficed for his frugal habits. His years of study were however, not yet at an end. The old and the new, the past and the present agitated his mind, clearness of perception and reasoning power were to be instilled into it from another source.

To the great minds which Germany produced in the eighteenth century belongs Gotthold Ephraim

Lessing. He was the first free-thinking man in Germany, probably more so than the royal hero Frederick, who had indeed liberated himself from superstition, but still had idols to whom he sacrificed. With his gigantic greatness of mind, Lessing afterwards burst through all bounds and regulations which a depraved taste, dry-as-dust condition, haughty orthodoxy and stubborn perverseness of every kind had desired to set up, to maintain and to perpetuate. The freedom that Lessing brought to the Germans was more solid and permanent than that which Voltaire aroused in depraved French society with his biting sarcasm; for his purpose was to ennoble, and his wit was a means to this end. Lessing wished to exalt the theatre into a pulpit; and art to a religion. Voltaire degraded philosophy into light gossip for the drawing-room.

It was an important moment for the history of the Jews, when these two young men, Mendelssohn and Lessing, became acquainted. It is related that a passionate lover of chess, named Isaac Hess, brought them together at the chess-board (1754). The royal game had indeed, already united two monarchs in the kingdom of thought. Lessing, the son of a pastor, was of a democratic nature: he sought after outcasts, and those who were despised by public opinion. As shortly before he had mixed with actors in Leipzig, and afterwards with soldiers in Breslau, so now he was not ashamed to converse in Berlin with the despised Jews. He even dedicated the first-fruits of his art, which to him appeared to be the highest good, to the pariah nation. With his drama, "The Jews," he desired to show that a Jew could be unselfish and noble, and he thereby aroused the displeasure of cultivated Christian circles. What Lessing, when writing this drama had foreshadowed as the ideal—a noble Jew, he immediately discovered in Mendels-



sohn, and it pleased him to see that he was not mistaken in his portraiture, and that the reality did not disprove his dream.

As soon as Lessing and Mendelssohn became acquainted, they learned to respect and love each other. The latter admired in his Christian friend his ability and unconstraint, his courage and perfect culture, his overflowing spirit and the vigour through which he bore a new world upon his broad shoulders, and Lessing admired in Mendelssohn the sublimity of thought, the yearning for truth and firmness of character based upon his moral nature. They were both so imbued with lofty nobility of mind that the one attributed to the other whatever perfection he could not attain to equally with his friend. Lessing suspected in his Jewish friend "a second Spinoza, who would do honour to his nation." Mendelssohn was completely enchanted by Lessing's friendship. A friendly look from him, he confessed, had such power over his mind that it banished all grief. They exerted a perceptible influence upon each other. Lessing, at that time, as it was termed, a mere "Schöngeist," aroused in Mendelssohn an interest for noble forms, æsthetic culture, poetry and art; and the latter in return imbued Lessing with philosophical thoughts. Thus they reciprocally gave and received, the true relationship of a worthy friendship. Their bond of amity became so strong, and united the two friends so sincerely, that it lasted beyond the grave.

The stimulus that Mendelssohn received from his friend was extraordinarily fruitful both for him and for the Jews, and it may be said without exaggeration that Lessing's influence was greater in ennobling the Jewish race than in elevating the German people. Thus it came about that the Jews grew to be more eager for study and more susceptible to culture. All that Mendelssohn appropriated to

himself from his intercourse with his friend became useful to Judaism. Through this friend, who by reason of his genial, sympathetic nature exerted great power of attraction upon talented men, Mendelssohn was introduced into his circle, learned the forms of society and threw off the awkwardness which the Ghetto had ingrafted upon him. He now devoted himself zealously to the acquisition of an attractive German style — a task all the more difficult, as the German language was strange to him, and the German vocabulary in use among the Jews was antiquated and misleading. Nor had he any pattern to follow; as, before Lessing had enriched the German style with his genius, it was unwieldy, rugged, and ungraceful. But Mendelssohn overcame all difficulties. He withdrew, as he expressed it, “a portion of his love from the worthy matron (philosophy), in order to bestow it upon her gentle handmaid (the so-called *belles-lettres*.”) Before a year of his intimacy with Lessing had elapsed, he was able to compose in an excellent form his “Philosophical Conversations” in the beginning of 1755, in which he, the Jew, blamed the Germans, because, misapprehending the deep meaning of their own genius, they had bent beneath the yoke of French taste: “Will, then, the Germans never recognise their own worth? Will they always exchange their own gold for the tinsel of their neighbours?” This rebuke was applicable even to the philosophical monarch, Frederick II., who did not respect native talent sufficiently, nor estimate that of foreign lands at its true value. The Jew was more Germanised than most of the Germans of his time.

His patriotic feelings for Judaism did not suffer any diminution through this; they were united in his heart with his love for German ideals. Although he could never overcome his dislike to the radical

system of Spinoza, yet in his first work he strove to preserve the latter's claim to his birthright in his philosophical testimony to new metaphysics. The "Philosophical Conversations" Mendelssohn handed to his friend, with the jesting remark that he also could produce something like Shaftesbury, the Englishman. Unknown to him Lessing had them printed, and thus contributed the first leaves to his friend's crown of laurel. Through Lessing's desire to advance him in every way, Mendelssohn was admitted to the learned circle in Berlin. When a "Coffee-house of the Learned" was established in the Prussian capital, hitherto deficient in literary tastes, and which consisted of a select society of about a hundred men of science, the founders did not omit the young Jewish philosopher, but invited him to join them. Each member had to deliver a discourse upon some scientific subject every fourth week. Mendelssohn, however, who was prevented from reading in public by his modesty and his want of eloquence, presented his contribution in writing. His essay was called an "Inquiry into Probability," which has to compensate for certainty in the limited sphere of human knowledge. While it was being read aloud, he was recognised as the author, and was applauded by the critical audience. Thus Mendelssohn was made a citizen in the republic of literature, took an active part in the literary productions of the day, and contributed towards the "Library of the Fine Arts," which had been founded by his friend, Nicolai. His taste became more refined every day, his style grew nobler and his thoughts more lucid. His method of composition was the more attractive because he knew how to season it with his bright humour.

That which Judaism had lost through the abasement of a slavery of a thousand years, Mendelssohn now recovered for it in a short space of time.



Almost everywhere, with the exception of a few Portuguese and Italian Jews, pure speech, the first medium of intellectual intercourse had been lost, and a childish jargon had been substituted, which, as the true companion of their misfortunes, the Jews appeared unwilling to discard. Mendelssohn felt disgust at the utter neglect of language. He saw that the Jewish corrupt speech assisted not a little in the "immorality of the ordinary human being," and he thought to accomplish a favourable result by rousing a growing aspiration towards a pure language. As one of the consequences of the debasement of language, the German and Polish Jews had lost all their sense of form, their taste for artistic beauty and æsthetic sympathy. Oppression from without and the onerous duties within, which had reduced them to mere slaves, had also banished from their midst these ennobling influences together with many others. Mendelssohn recovered these lost treasures for his brethren. He manifested such a remarkable liking for the beautiful, that he was afterwards recognised by the Germans as a judge in questions of taste. The perverse course of study pursued by the Jews since the fourteenth century had blunted their minds to simplicity. They had grown accustomed to all that was artificial, distorted, super-cunningly wrought, and to subtleties, so that the simple, unadorned truth became worthless, if not childish and ridiculous, in their eyes. Their train of thoughts was mostly crooked, uncultivated, and opposed to logical accuracy. He who in a short time was to restore their youthful strength, so schooled himself that twisted methods and perverse thinking became repugnant to him. With his refined appreciation for the simple, the beautiful and the true, he acquired a profound understanding for Biblical literature, which with its simplicity and truth lay open before him. Through the close layers

of musty rubbish, with which commentaries and super-commentaries had encumbered it, he penetrated to the innermost core, and was able to cleanse the beautiful picture from dust, and to understand and render comprehensible the ancient Revelation as if it were a new one. Even if not gifted with the ability of arranging his thoughts in a poetic or rhythmical order, he had, nevertheless, a delicate perception of the poetic beauties of every literature, and especially for those books written in the Holy language. And what formed the crowning-point of these attainments was, that he was impressed with moral tenderness of feeling, with high-strung fibres of conscientiousness and truthfulness, as if there flowed through his veins the blood of a long series of noble ancestors, who had chosen for their life's task the love of the honourable and worthy. An almost childish modesty adorned him, which was however quite remote from self-despising subservience. He combined in himself so many innate qualities, and others so difficult to acquire, that he presented a striking contrast to the caricatures in which both German and Polish Jews were depicted at the time. There was but one feeling wanting in Mendelssohn—and this deficiency was very detrimental to the near future of Judaism. He lacked an appreciation for history, for things unimportant at the time, but of vast significance in the distant future, for the comic and tragic course of the human race during the progress of time. "What do I know of history!" he observed, in half-bashful, half-scornful tones; "that which is called history, the history of States, of wise men, I have no liking for." He shared this deficiency with his prototype Maimuni, and infected his surroundings with it.

Some of his brilliant qualities shone out from Mendelssohn's eyes and features, and won more

hearts for him than if he had striven to gain them. Curiosity about "this Jew" began to be aroused even at the Court of Frederick the Great, and he was considered as the embodiment of wisdom. The dauntless Lessing infused such courage into him, that he ventured to pronounce judgment in a periodical upon the poetical works of the Prussian sovereign, and to point out their faults (1760). Frederick the Great, who regarded verse-making as poetry, and definite decisions as philosophy, worshipped the Muse in the language of the Court, thoroughly despised the German tongue, at this time pregnant with real poetry, and mocked at intellectual gifts which were a holy reality to solid thinkers. Mendelssohn, the Jew, felt hurt at this hatred of German on the part of the king, as well as by his tawdry wisdom. As however one dare not tell the truth to monarchs, through the trumpet of praise he yet cleverly caused a soft note of blame to be heard, which was only discernible to the acute reader.

Able as Mendelssohn had concealed his censure on the king, yet a malicious courtier, the Preacher Justi, discovered it, as also the name of the fault-finder, and denounced him "as a Jew, who had thrown aside all reverence for the Most Sacred person of His Majesty in insolent criticism of his poetry." Suddenly, Mendelssohn received a harsh command to appear on a Saturday at Sans-Souci; this act was in accordance with the coarseness of the age. Full of dread, Mendelssohn made his way to Potsdam to the royal castle, was examined and asked whether he was the author of this disrespectful criticism. He admitted his offence and excused himself with the observation, that "he who makes verses, plays at nine-pins, and he who plays at nine-pins, be he monarch or peasant, must be satisfied with the judgment of the boy who has charge of the bowls,



as to the merit of his playing." Frederick was no doubt ashamed to punish the Jewish reviewer in the presence of the French cynics of his Court for certain subtle remarks, and thus Mendelssohn escaped untouched.

Fortune was extraordinarily favourable to this man, who was unwittingly the chief herald of the future. It gave him many warm friends, who found a true delight in exalting him, though a Jew, in public opinion. It secured for him a not over-splendid yet fairly independent situation as book-keeper in the house where he had hitherto held the toilsome position of resident tutor. It led him to the acquaintance of a trusty, tender, and simple companion for life, who surrounded him with tokens of devoted love. Fortune soon procured a great triumph for him. The Berlin Academy had offered a prize for an essay upon the subject, "Are Philosophical (Metaphysical) truths susceptible of Mathematical Demonstration." Modestly Mendelssohn set to work to solve this problem. He did not belong to a learned guild, had only learnt his alphabet when grown up, and at an age when pupils educated in schools already began to confuse their heads with Latin. When he became aware that his friend, the young highly-promising scholar, Thomas Abt, was also a competitor, he almost lost courage and desired to withdraw. Still his work gained the prize (June, 1763), not alone over Abt but even over Kant, whose essay only received an honourable mention. Mendelssohn obtained the stipulated prize of fifty ducats and the medal. The Jew, the tradesman, had defeated his rivals who belonged to the learned guild. The disquisition of Kant went deeper into the question, but that of Mendelssohn had the advantage of clearness and comprehensibility. "He had torn away the thorns from the roses of philosophy." Because he had

been compelled to acquire each item of his knowledge by great labour, and had only with difficulty become conversant with the barbarous dialect of the schools, he did not content himself with dry formulæ, but exerted himself to render intelligible, both for himself and others, metaphysical conceptions and truths. This circumstance had helped him in his success over his much profounder opponent. His essay, which together with that of Kant was translated at the expense of the Academy into French and Latin, earned for him assured renown in the learned world, which was all the more enhanced by the fact that the prize-winner was a Jew.

In the same year (October, 1763), he received a distinction from King Frederick, characteristic of the low condition of the Jews in Prussia. This honour was the privilege of being a Protected Jew (*Schutz Jude*), *i.e.*, the assurance that he would not one fine day be expelled from Berlin. Hitherto, he was only tolerated in Berlin as an appendage to the house of the master who supplied him with bread. The philosophical King Frederick sympathised in the antipathy of his illustrious enemy Maria Theresa to the Jews, and issued anti-Jewish laws more worthy of the Middle Ages than of the eighteenth century, which was so proud of its humanity. He wished to see the Jews of his dominions diminished in number, rather than increased. The General Protection Regulations of Frederick for the Jews were an insult to the age. The Marquis d'Argent, one of Frederick's French courtiers, who in his naïveté could not conceive that a wise and learned man like Mendelssohn should any day become liable to be driven out of Berlin by the brutal police, endeavoured to persuade Mendelssohn to sue for the privilege of protection, and urged the king to grant it. However, it only lasted for a limited period, as defined

in the dry official document. Ultimately, Mendelssohn became a Protected Jew of Prussia.

The philosophical "Schutz-Jude" of Berlin now won greater success with his work, which met with almost rapturous admiration from his contemporaries in all classes of society. Two decades later this production was already obsolete, and at the present day has only a literary value. Nevertheless, when it appeared, it rightly attained great importance. Mendelssohn had hit upon the exact moment to bring it forward, and he became one of the celebrities of the eighteenth century. For almost sixteen centuries Christianity had educated the nations of Europe, had governed them and almost surfeited them with belief in the supernatural. It had employed all available means to effect this end, and finally, when the thinkers had awakened from their slumber, caused by its lullabies, to inquire into the certainty secured by this announcement of salvation which promised so much, serious people said with regret—whilst sceptics chuckled with brutal delight—that it only offered imaginary fancies in the place of truth.

Seriously or satirically, the French thinkers of the eighteenth century—the whole body of Materialists—had revealed the hollowness of the doctrine, in which the so-called cultured peoples had found comfort and tranquillity for many centuries. The world was deprived of a God, the heavens were enshrouded in mist; all that had hitherto seemed to be firm and incapable of being displaced was wrapped up in confusion. The doctrine of Jesus had lost its power of attraction, and had become degraded in the eyes of earnest and thoughtful men to the level of childish fables. Infidelity became a fashion. With the un-deifying of Jesus, the dethronement of God appeared to go hand in hand, and, together with it, the important dogma of the Immortality of the



Soul. Christian theology had borrowed this doctrine from the wisdom of the Greek schools, and, after adorning it with strange feathers, it had been incisively attacked. Thereupon depended not merely the confidence of mankind in a future existence, but also the practical morals of the present. If the soul is mortal and transient, they thought in the eighteenth century, then the acts of men are of no consequence! Whether he be good or evil, virtuous or criminal, on the other side of the grave there would be no retribution. Thus, after the long dream of many centuries, the civilised portion of mankind again fell into the despondency prevalent in Roman society at the time of the emperors; they were without a God, without support, without moral freedom, without stimulus to a virtuous life. Man had degenerated into a complicated machine.

Mendelssohn was also impressed with the reflection that the dignity of man stood or fell with the question of the immortality of the soul. He therefore undertook to restore this belief to the cultured world, to reveal again the lost truth, to render it fixed, and to ward off materialistic attacks upon it so decisively, that the dying man should calmly look forward to a blissful future and to felicity in the after-life. He composed a dialogue, called "Phædon, or the Immortality of the Soul." It was to be a popular book, a new doctrine of salvation for the unbelieving or sceptical world. Therefore he gave to his dialogue an easily comprehensible attractive style, after the pattern of the dialogue of Plato, from whom he also took the external form in which he clothed his views. But Plato supplied him with the mere form only. Mendelssohn caused his Socrates to give utterance to the philosophy of the eighteenth century through the mouth of his pupil, Phædon.

His starting-point, in proving the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, is the fact of the existence of

God, of which he has the highest possible certainty. The soul is the work of God, just as the body is; the body, according to the most precise disputant, does not perish after dissolution, but is transformed into other elements; much less then can the soul, a simple essence, become decomposed and perish. Further, God has acquainted the soul with the idea of immortality, with which He has implanted it. Could He, the Benevolent and the True One, practise deception?

“If our soul were mortal, then reason would be a dream, which Jupiter has sent to us in order that we might forget our misery; and we would be like the beasts, only to seek food and to die.”

Every thought which is inborn in man must therefore also be true and real.

In his method of demonstration of the doctrine of immortality, Mendelssohn had also another noble purpose in view. He thought to counteract thereby the malady of talented youths of the day, of the Jerusalem-Werthers, who, without any goal for their endeavours, were excluded from political and elevating public activity, who wandered about aimlessly, or were lost in whimsical sentimentality and self-created pain, even in thoughts of suicide, which indeed they would have carried out had their courage not failed them for such a deed. Mendelssohn, therefore, sought, in his “Phædon,” to inculcate the conviction, that man, with his immortal soul, was a possession of God, and had no manner of right to decide arbitrarily about himself and his life, or about the separation of his soul from his body—a feeble sort of proof, but it sufficed for that weakly, effeminate generation.

With his “Phædon,” Mendelssohn attained more than he had intended and expected, viz., “the conviction of the heart, the warmth of feeling,” in favour of the doctrine of immortality. “Phædon” was the most popular book of its

time, and was perused with heart and soul. In two years its success was so great, that it ran through three editions, and was immediately translated into all the European languages, also into Hebrew. Theologians, philosophers, artists, poets such as Herder, Gleim, Goethe who was then but a youth, statesmen and princes—men and women—seized upon it, reanimated their depressed religious courage, and gave thanks, with an enthusiasm which would to-day appear absurd, to the Jewish sage who had restored to them that comfort which Christianity no longer afforded. The deliverance effected by Mendelssohn, the Jew, was as joyfully welcomed by the world which had grown pagan, as the revelations to the heathens in an earlier epoch by the Jews, by Jesus and Paul of Tarsus. The people of the day were delighted both with the contents and the form in which they were presented. Mendelssohn's book was composed in a glowing, fresh, vigorous style, and was a happy, artistic imitation of the dialogue of Plato. From all sides letters of congratulation poured in upon the modest author. Everyone who did not belong to the literary guild which held sway in Berlin, eagerly sought out the Jewish Plato as one of the greatest celebrities of the Prussian capital in order to have a word with him. The Duke of Brunswick seriously thought of securing the services of Mendelssohn for his State. The Prince of Lippe-Schaumberg treated him as a bosom friend. The Berlin Academy of Science proposed him as a member. But King Frederick struck the name of Mendelssohn off the list, because, as it was said, he desired to have the Empress Catherine admitted into the learned body, and she would be insulted in having a Jew as a brother member. Two Benedictine friars—one from the Convent of Peter, at Erfurt, and the other from the Convent of La Trappe—came to Mendelssohn, the Jew, as to the adviser of



their conscience, to ask him for instruction in moral and philosophical conduct. The book "Phædon," as already remarked, was out of date twenty years after, but it raised its author to the height of fame. He was fortunate, because he introduced it to the world exactly at the right moment.

An incident vexatious in itself served to exalt Mendelssohn to an extraordinary degree in the eyes of his contemporaries, and to invest him with the halo of martyrdom. John Caspar Lavater, an evangelical minister of Zurich, an enthusiast who afterwards joined the Jesuits, thought that he had found in Mendelssohn's intellectual countenance the confirmation of his deceptive art, which consists in discerning the character and talents of a man from his features. Lavater asserted that in every line of Mendelssohn's face the unprejudiced could at once recognise the soul of Socrates. He was completely enchanted with Mendelssohn's head, raved about it, desiring to possess a well-executed model, in order to bring honour upon his art. After Mendelssohn had caused his *Phædon* to speak in so Greek a fashion that no one could have recognised the author as a Jew, Lavater arrived at the fantastic conclusion that Mendelssohn had become entirely estranged from his religion. Lavater learned from certain Jews of Berlin that they were indifferent to Judaism, and forthwith reckoned Mendelssohn amongst their number. There was the additional fact that, in a conversation with Lavater, Mendelssohn had cautiously and calmly pronounced his judgment upon Christianity, and had spoken with a certain respect of Jesus; indeed, with the reservation, that "Jesus of Nazareth had only desired to be a virtuous man." This expression appeared to Lavater to be the dawning of grace and belief. What if this great man, this incarnation of wisdom who had become indifferent towards Judaism, could be won over to Christianity!

This was the train of thought which arose in Lavater's mind after reading "Phædon." Out of ingenuousness or cunning he spread his net for Mendelssohn, and thus showed how ignorant he was of his true character. About this time, a professor of Geneva, Caspar Bonnet, had written in French a weak apology, entitled "Investigation into the Evidences of Christianity against Unbelievers." This work Lavater translated into German for him, and sent with a direct dedication to Mendelssohn, hoping to lay a snare for him (4th Sept., 1769). Lavater therein solemnly adjured him to refute publicly the proofs of Bonnet in behalf of Christianity, in as far as he found it correct to do, "what sagacity, love of truth and honesty would naturally dictate, what a Socrates would have done if he had read this treatise and had found it unanswerable." If Lavater had been really acquainted with the secrets of the heart, as he prided himself, he would have understood that, even if Mendelssohn had severed all connection with Judaism for ever, Christianity was still more repugnant to him, and that the sagacity which implies a regard to profit and the advantages of a pleasant existence, was altogether lacking in his character. Lavater did not desire to expose him before the public, but he wished to create a sensation, without thinking what pain he was causing to the shy scholar of Berlin.

Nevertheless, Mendelssohn had to thank Lavater for having imprudently or through pious cunning drawn him forth from his bashfulness and seclusion. Mendelssohn had indeed expressed his relations with Judaism and his co-religionists so vaguely that onlookers might have been misled. Upon the platform of publicity he was a philosopher and an elegant writer, who represented the principles of humanity and good taste, and apparently did not trouble about his race. In the darkness of the

Ghetto he was a strictly orthodox Jew, who, apparently unconcerned with the laws of beauty, joined in the observance of every pious custom. With his self-contained and steadfast character he seemed to be a twofold personality, according as he was present in Christian or Jewish society. As he could not stand up in defence of Judaism without on the one hand affronting Christianity by his philosophical convictions, and on the other by showing if ever so slightly his dissatisfaction at the accumulated confusion of the synagogue, he could hardly escape offending the sensibility of his co-religionists and quarrelling with them. Neither of these courses, owing to his peace-loving character, entered his mind. He would have been able to pass his life without any external collision in an attitude of silence, if Lavater's rude importunity had not dragged him out of this false position, altogether unworthy of a man with a historical vocation. However, painful as it was to him to reveal his innermost thoughts upon Judaism and Christianity, he could not hold his peace at this challenge without being considered a coward by his friends. These reflections weighed heavily upon him and caused him to take up the glove.

He entered skilfully upon the contest, thus forced upon him, and was ultimately victorious. At the end of 1769, in the mildest form, in a public letter addressed to Christianity in general and Lavater as its representative, Mendelssohn wrote the most cutting truths in such a manner as in former times would inevitably have led to bloodshed or the stake. Mendelssohn had examined his religion since the days of his youth and found it true. His worldly wisdom and labours in the fine arts were not the end, but were the means to prepare him for testing Judaism. It was impossible for him to hope for much profit from this inquiry; and as to pleasure—



“O my worthy friend, the condition into which my co-religionists have been driven in civil life is so far removed from all free exercise of spiritual powers, that one’s satisfaction is not increased when one has correctly learned the rights of man. He who knows the state in which we now are, and has a humane heart, will understand more than I can express.”

If the examination of Judaism was of no gain to him, why need he be chained to this religion that was so intensely and universally despised, what could prevent him from leaving it? The fear of his co-religionists, forsooth? Their secular power was too insignificant to be able to do any harm.

“I will not deny that I have noticed in my religion certain human additions and abuses, such as every religion accepts in course of time, and which rather dim its splendour. But of the essentials of my faith I am so firmly and indisputably assured, that I call God to witness that I will adhere to my fundamental creed as long as my soul does not assume another nature.”

He was as opposed to Christianity as ever, for the reason, which he communicated to Lavater verbally, and which the latter could not conceal, that its founder had declared himself to be God.

“And, for my part, Judaism may be utterly crushed in every polemical elementary book, and subdued triumphantly in every school exercise, without my ever being drawn into a controversy about it. Without the slightest contradiction from me, everyone who has thoroughly or only partly acquainted himself with Rabbinism out of old books which no rational Jew reads, can give a ridiculous account of Judaism both to himself and to his readers. The contemptible opinion that is held of a Jew I would desire to shame by virtue, not by controversy. My religion, my philosophy, and my status in civil life are the weightiest arguments for avoiding all religious discussion, and for treating in public writings upon those truths which must be equally important to all religions.”

Judaism was only binding upon the congregation of Jacob. It desired proselytes so little, that the Rabbis ordained that any person who offered to unite himself to this religion was to be dissuaded from his design by earnest representations.

“The religion of my fathers need not be spread abroad; we do not send missions to the two Indies or to Greenland, in order to preach our belief to these remote nations. I have the good fortune to possess as friends several distinguished men who are not of my creed. We love each other dearly, and never has my heart secretly admonished me,

saying, 'It is hurtful to your beautiful soul!' I am able to recognise national prejudices and erroneous religious opinions among my fellow-citizens, and nevertheless am compelled to remain silent, whilst these errors do not directly affect natural religion nor natural law (morality), but are only accidentally connected with the advancement of good. It is true the morality of our actions does not deserve the name, if it is based upon error. . . . But as long as the truth is not recognised, as long as it does not become national, so as to work a powerful effect upon the great mass of the people like an ingrained prejudice, so long must it be almost sacred to every friend of virtue. These are the reasons that my religion and my philosophy give me to shun religious disputes."

Hence it happened that, being a Jew, he had to be content with toleration, because in other countries even this was denied to his race. "Is it not forbidden, according to the laws of your native city," he asked Lavater, "even for your circumcised friend to visit you in Zürich?" The French work of Bonnet he did not find so convincing as to cause his convictions to waver; he had already read better defences of Christianity written by Englishmen and Germans; it was also not original, but was borrowed from German writings. The arguments were so feeble and so little tending to prove Christianity that any religion could be equally well or as badly defended by them. If Lavater thought to have convinced a Socrates of the truth of Christianity by this treatise, he thereby only showed what power prejudice exerts over reason. If the evangelical consistory, before whom Mendelssohn offered to lay his letter for censorship before printing it, did not regret granting him permission to print whatever he pleased, "because they were certain that through his wisdom and modesty he would write nothing that might give public offence," still he did undoubtedly give offence to many pious persons.

The epistle of Mendelssohn to Lavater naturally made a great sensation. Whilst he, since the appearance of *Phædon*, belonged to the select band of authors whose works every cultivated person felt obliged to read, it also chanced that the controversy had an attractive side at the time. The freethinkers

—who were by no means few at this time—were glad that a man, and he too a Jew, had ventured to utter a candid word about Christianity. Owing to his obtrusive method and his presumptuous and overbearing advocacy of Christianity, Lavater had many enemies. These read Mendelssohn's clever reply to the zealous conversionist with mischievous delight. The Hereditary Prince of Brunswick, who had formerly been charmed by Mendelssohn, testified (2nd January, 1770) to his admiration of him, that he had spoken "with such great tact and a high degree of humanitarianism" upon these difficult questions. Bonnet himself, who was less objectionable than he who had so foolishly sung his praises, fully admitted the justice of Mendelssohn's remarks, and complained of Lavater's injudicious zeal. He prepared a triumph for him in a letter, dated 12th January, 1770. Bonnet's dissertation, with which Lavater had desired to convert the Jew, had not been written against the honourable "House of Jacob," for which his heart entertained the sincerest and warmest wishes; much less had it been his intention to induce the Jewish philosopher to have a favourable opinion of Christianity. He was full of admiration for the wisdom, the moderation, and the abilities of the famous son of Abraham. He desired indeed that Christianity should be investigated by him, as it could only gain by being subjected to a close inquiry by the wise son of Mendel. But he did not wish to fall into Lavater's mistakes and make it burdensome for him. Meanwhile, in spite of his virtuous indignation, Bonnet countenanced a little bit of knavery that was aimed against Mendelssohn. Lavater himself was obliged in a letter to publicly beg Mendelssohn's pardon for having placed him in such an awkward position, entreating him at the same time to attest that he had not intentionally been guilty of any indiscretion or perfidy. Thus Mendelssohn had



an opportunity of acting magnanimously towards his opponent. In fact, he grew all the more tenacious and did not surrender an iota of his Judaism; nor did he even give up its Talmudical and Rabbinical peculiarities, but with every step his courage grew.

Mendelssohn did not wish to let pass this propitious opportunity of glorifying the Judaism which was so intensely contemned, and to make it clear to thinking minds that it was in no way opposed to reason. Despite the warnings of timid Jews, who strongly urged him to allow the controversy to lapse, so as not to stir up persecutions, he continued more boldly than ever to lay stress upon the chasm which Christianity had dug between itself and reason, whereas Judaism in its essence was in accord with reason. "The nearer I approach this so highly-esteemed religion," he wrote in one of his examinations of Bonnet's "Palinginésie," "the more abhorrent is it to my reason." It afforded him especial delight when the strictly orthodox Christians tried to abuse Judaism as being at one with natural religion (Deism).

"Blessed be God, who has given unto us the doctrine of truth. We have no fundamental beliefs that are contrary to superior reason. We add nothing, as commandments and statutes to natural religion; but the fundamental creeds of our religion rest upon the basis of understanding." "This is our glory and our pride, and all the writings of our sages are full of it."

Frankly, Mendelssohn expressed to the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick his belief in the untenability of Christian and the reasonableness of Jewish dogmas. He was of opinion that enough had not yet been done for Judaism.

"Please God, if another similar opportunity be granted to me, I will do the same again. . . . when I think of what we ought to do for the recognition of the sanctity of our religion."

Those who did not shun all reference to reason declared Mendelssohn and his defence to be in the

right, and beheld with astonishment that Judaism, so greatly despised, was yet so vastly superior to the universally orthodox Christianity. Through its noble son, Judaism celebrated a triumph. The unhappy ardour of Lavater, and the candid, refined and daring answer of Mendelssohn for a long time formed the topic of conversation among cultured circles in Germany, and even beyond its borders. The journals commented upon it and noted every incident of it. Anecdotes passed backwards and forwards between Zürich and Berlin. It was narrated that Lavater had asserted if he were able to continue for eleven days in a state of complete holiness and prayer, he would most positively succeed in converting Mendelssohn to Christianity. When this repetition of the sentiments that rankled in Lavater's breast was conveyed to the ears of Mendelssohn, he laughingly retorted, "Yes, if I were permitted to sit here in my armchair and smoke a pipe philosophically, I might be satisfied with it!" There was more said about the contest between Mendelssohn and Lavater than of war and peace. Every post brought pamphlets written in German and French, unimportant productions in themselves, which did not deserve to live long. Only a few were in favour of Mendelssohn, the majority took the part of Christianity and its representatives against the "insolence of the Jew," who did not consider it an honour to be offered admission into the Christian community.

The worst of these was a petty and choleric author, named John Balthasar Kölbele, of Frankfurt-on-the-Maine, who, from hatred of the Jews, or from distemper of body and soul, hurled such coarse insults against Mendelssohn, the Rabbis, the Jews and Judaism, that his very violence injured the effect of his own onslaught. Kölbele had previously jeered at them through the medium of lay figures

in one of his romances which, together with himself soon passed into oblivion. He desired to write, or, perhaps did write, an "Anti-Phædon" against Mendelssohn's "Phædon." His whole gall was, however, vented in a letter to "Mr. Mendelssohn upon the affair of Lavater and Kölbele" (March, 1770). Against the assertions of Mendelssohn as to the purity of the doctrines of Judaism, he brought forward the calumnies and perversions of his brother in feeling, Eisenmenger. Mendelssohn's pure, unselfish character was known in almost all cultivated and high circles of Europe. Nevertheless, Kölbele suspected him of adhering to Judaism from self-interest, "because a Jewish bookkeeper is in a better position than a Christian Professor, and the former also receives some profit whilst attending in the antechambers of princes." To Mendelssohn's asseveration that he would cling to Judaism all his lifetime, the malignant fool or libeller rejoined, "How little value do Christians attach to the oath of a Jew!" Mendelssohn disposed of him in a few words in the postscript of a letter addressed to Lavater. Nothing more was required; Kölbele had condemned himself. Mendelssohn profited by these vilifying attacks, inasmuch as respectable authors, who were not a little irritated by his independent and bold action, left him in peace, rather than be associated with Kölbele. Mendelssohn emerged victorious from this apparently trifling conflict, which had lasted for nearly two years; he rose in public opinion, because he had manfully vindicated his own religion.

He had, however, for this very reason, to endure the reproaches of pious Jews. That which his discernment had feared now took place. From love of truth, he had publicly declared, that "he had found in Judaism certain human additions and abuses, which only served to dim its splendour." This expression offended those who revered



every custom, however un-Jewish, as a revelation from Sinai, because it was sanctified by time and the authorised code. The entire Jewish world and all members of the community of Berlin, with the exception of the few who belonged to Mendelssohn's circle, would not admit that rust had accumulated upon the noble metal of Judaism. He was therefore questioned on this point, probably by Rabbi Hirschel Lewin, and asked for an exact explanation of what was to be understood by the phrase. He was very well able to give a reply, which probably satisfied the Rabbi, who was no zealot. But his orthodoxy was still suspected by the strictly pious people whom he termed "the K lbeles of our co-religionists." He was obliged to justify himself against the intention, wrongly attributed to him, of describing the decisions of Talmudical sages "as mere worn-out utterances." Young Poles, thirsting for knowledge, "with good heads, but confused thoughts," both pure and impure elements, a number of adventurous spirits, now forced themselves upon Mendelssohn and brought him into evil odour. The majority of them had not alone broken with the Talmud, but also with religion and morality; they led a dissolute life, and considered such an existence as a sign of philosophy and enlightenment. Out of love to mankind and independent thought, Mendelssohn conversed with them, held discussions with them, advanced and aided them, which also cast a false light upon his relations to Judaism. The frivolity and excesses of these young men were imputed to him, and they were regarded as his prot g es and disciples.

He soon gave an opportunity for an increase of this suspicion. The Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, in a mild, fatherly way (April, 1772), had forbidden the Jews of his land to bury the dead at once, according to Jewish usage, in order to avoid the dangers of premature interment. Jewish piety to-

wards the deceased—forbidding them to expose their dead above the earth long enough for decomposition to set in, which was definitely commanded in the ritual code—felt itself affronted by this edict, as though the Duke had commanded them to transgress a religious practice. The representatives of the congregations of Schwerin supplicated Jacob Emden, of Altona, the aged champion of orthodoxy, to demonstrate from Talmudical and Rabbinical laws, that the prolonged exposure of a corpse was an important infringement of Jewish law. Emden, who knew his inability to compose a memorial to this effect in German, referred the people of Schwerin to Mendelssohn, whose word had great influence with princes. They followed his advice. How astounded were they to learn, from a letter of Mendelssohn's (May, 1772), that he agreed with the Ducal order, that the dead should not be buried before the third day; because, according to the experience of competent physicians, cases of apparent death were possible; and that it was right, in fact, compulsory, to rescue human life in spite of the most stringent ordinances of the religious code! Mendelssohn gave a number of proofs that in Talmudical times precautions were taken for the prevention of hasty burial in doubtful cases. His opinions were faultlessly elaborated in the Rabbinical manner, with the exception of one blunder which he committed. Nevertheless, true to his peaceful, complaisant nature, he sent the formula of a petition to the Duke to mitigate the decree. Emden, however, in his orthodox zeal, stamped this disputed question almost as an article of faith. A custom that was so universal among all Jews, among Italians and Portuguese as well as Germans and Poles, could not be lightly set aside. Not much value was to be attached to the sayings of doctors. Mendelssohn's Talmudical proofs were not conclusive. In a letter Emden gave him clearly to under-

stand that he advised him, for his own benefit, to remove the suspicion of lukewarm belief, which he had aroused in consequence of his evil surroundings. Thus there arose a petty discord between Mendelssohn and the rigidly orthodox party, which afterwards increased.

Meanwhile, his friend Lessing, just before his death, had unintentionally stirred up a storm in Germany which caused the Church to tremble, and, impelled by discontent and an artistic impulse, he had glorified Mendelssohn, together with all Jews, in a perfect poetic creation. The first indication of this tempest, which shook Christianity to its core, was Mendelssohn's dispute with Lavater. Lessing was so deeply excited at the certainty of victory assumed by the representative of Church Christianity that he had encouraged his Jewish friend with all his energy to engage in valorous conflict.

“You alone dare and are able to write and speak thus upon this matter, and are therefore infinitely more fortunate than all other honest people, who cannot achieve the subversion of this detestable structure of unreason, otherwise than under the pretence of building it up anew.”

At this time he did not suspect that he already held a thunderbolt in his hands, which he would soon be in a position to wield against these false gods who thought they had conquered heaven. During his restless life, which corresponded to his constantly agitated spirit, Lessing happened to come to Hamburg, where he made the acquaintance of the despised and free-thinking family of Reimarus. Hermann Samuel Reimarus, a profound inquirer, indignant at the fossilised and insolent Lutheran Christianity, had addressed to the pastors of Hamburg a “Defence of the Rational Worshippers of God,” in which he rejected every revealed religion, endeavouring to assign to reason the rights denied it, and in which he depreciated the founder of



Christianity. Reimarus, however, had not courage to utter boldly what he had acknowledged as true and in accordance with his convictions, and to lay bare publicly the weaknesses of the dominant religion. He left this treatise, which contained dangerous and inflammatory materials, to his family and to a secret order of free-thinking comrades, as a legacy. Elisa Reimarus, a noble daughter worthy of her father, handed fragments of this incendiary manuscript to Lessing, who read them with interest, and thought of publishing them. However, he had not sufficient confidence in himself to give a decision upon points of theological discussion, and therefore sent these fragments for examination to his Jewish friend, who was capable of judging them. Mendelssohn did not, indeed, find this work very convincing, because the author, embittered at the overbearing conduct of the Church, had fallen into the opposite error of setting up the most spiritless form of infidelity, and, according to the shortsighted view of that age, of finding only petty intrigues in great historical movements. Mendelssohn, however, could not dissuade his friend from thinking that this book would be of service in humiliating the pride of the Church. He seriously thought of hurling the inflammatory writings of Reimarus, under a false name, at the Church. But the Berlin Censorship would not allow them to be printed. Then Lessing formed another plan. By his position of superintendent of the Ducal Library of Brunswick in Wolfenbüttel, he was at liberty to publish the manuscript treasures of this rich collection. In the interests of truth, he perpetrated a falsehood, asserting that he had discovered in this library these "Fragments of an Unknown," the work of an author of an earlier generation. He began, under cover of his censorial power, to publish them as contributions "to history and literature from the

treasures of the library at Wolfenbüttel." Gradually he proceeded with the publication of these fragments. The first instalment was couched in an entreating tone, asking for support of the religion of reason against the religion of the catechism and the pulpit. He then ventured a step further—to prove the impossibility of the miracles upon which the Church was based, and especially to make apparent the unhistorical character and incredibility of the resurrection of Jesus, one of the main pillars of Christianity, with which it stands or falls. Finally, Lessing produced the most important of the fragments at the beginning of 1778, "Upon the Aim of Jesus and His Disciples." Herein it was explained that Jesus had only desired to announce himself as the Jewish Messiah and King of the Jews. To this end he had made secret preparations with his disciples, formed conspiracies to kindle a revolution in Jerusalem, and also attacked the authorities in order to cause the downfall of the High Council (the Synhedrion). But when this plan of subversion had failed, and Jesus had to suffer death, his disciples invented another system and declared that the kingdom of Jesus was not of this world. They preached of him as the spiritual redeemer of the whole race of mankind, and gave prominence to the hope of his speedy reappearance; thus the Apostles had concealed and disfigured the original teachings of Jesus.

This treatment of the early history of Christianity, which was fairly calculated to overthrow the whole edifice of the Church, spread like a lightning-flash. It was soberly, convincingly, and scientifically elaborated, and was comprehensible to everyone. A state of amazement and stupefaction was the result, especially on the publication of the last fragment. Statesmen and citizens were affected by it, as well as theologians. Public opinion upon the matter was divided. Earnest youths, who wished to succeed in

the path of theology, were overwhelmed; they refused to yield their life's activity to what was perhaps only a dream, and chose another vocation. Several affirmed that the proofs against Christianity were irrefutable. The anonymity of the writer made the dispute more violent. Conjectures were made as to who the author might be; Mendelssohn's name was publicly mentioned. Only a few knew that this blow had been struck by Reimarus, once so admired amongst theologians. The anger of the zealots concentrated itself against the publisher, Lessing. He was attacked by all parties, and had no defender on his side. His Jewish friend would readily have hastened to his assistance, but how could he mix himself up in these squabbles of the Christians? Among the numerous slanders circulated by the orthodox about Lessing it was said that the wealthy Jewish community of Amsterdam had paid him one thousand ducats for the publication of the Wolfenbüttel fragments. Accustomed however to combat, single-handed, against want of taste and unreason, Lessing was man enough to protect himself. It was a pleasant sight to behold this giant in the fray warding off crushing strokes with friendly banter and graceful skill. He defeated his enemies one after the other; and most successfully overthrew a man who was the type of blindly credulous arrogance and malicious orthodoxy, the minister Göze in Hamburg. As his pigmy opponents could not overcome this Hercules by literary skill, they summoned to their aid the secular arm. Lessing's productions were forbidden and confiscated, he was compelled to deliver up the manuscripts of the "Fragments"; his freedom from censorship was withdrawn, and he was further cautioned not to write any more upon this subject (1778). He was able to protect himself against these violent proceedings, but he was vulnerable in



one point. The greatest man whom Germany had hitherto produced was without means, and his position as librarian being uncertain, he was obliged to seek for other means of support. During one of his sleepless nights (10th August, 1778), a plan struck him which would simultaneously relieve him from pecuniary embarrassments and inflict a worse blow than ten "Fragments" could have done upon the Lutheran theologians. They thundered against him from their church pulpits; he would try to answer them from his pulpit in the theatre. The latest most mature and most perfect offspring of his Muse, "Nathan the Wise," should be his avenger. Lessing had already carried this idea in his mind for several years; but he could not have brought it into effect at a more favourable time.

To the annoyance of the pious Christians who, with all their bigotry, uncharitableness, and desire for persecution, laid claim to every virtue on account of their belief in Jesus, and denounced the Jews, one and all, as outcasts, Lessing represented a Jew as the immaculate ideal of virtue, wisdom, and conscientiousness. This ideal he had found embodied in Moses Mendelssohn. He illumined him and the greatness of his character through the bright light of theatrical effects, and impressed the stamp of eternity upon him by his immortal verses. The chief hero of Lessing's drama is a sage and a merchant, like Mendelssohn, "as good as he is clever, and as clever as he is wise." His nation honours him as if he were a prince, and yet, though it calls him the wise Nathan, he was good above all things:

"The law commandeth mercy, not compliance.  
 And thus for mercy's sake he's uncomplying:  
 . . . . How free from prejudice his lofty soul—  
 His heart to every virtue how unlocked—  
 With every lovely feeling how familiar . . . .  
 . . . . O what a Jew is he! yet wishes  
 Only to pass as a Jew."

A son of Judaism, Nathan had elevated himself to the highest level of human feeling and charitableness, for such his Law prescribed. In a fanatical massacre by Crusaders, ferocious Christians had slaughtered all the Jews in Jerusalem, with their wives and children, and his beloved wife and seven hopeful sons had been burnt at the same time. At first he raged, grew angry, and murmured against his woes, but anon he spake with the patience of Job :

“ This also was God's decree : So be it ! ”

In his terrible grief a mounted soldier brought him a young, tender Christian child, an orphan girl, and Nathan took it, bore it to his couch, kissed it, flung himself upon his knees, and thanked God that at least one out of the seven had been preserved. This Christian maiden he loved with all the warmth of a fatherly heart, and educated her in a strictly conscientious manner. Not one religion in preference to another, still less his own, did he instil into the young soul of Recha, or Blanche, but only the doctrines of pure reverence of God, ideal virtue and morality. Thus far the representative of Judaism.

How did the representative of Christianity, on the other hand, behave? The Patriarch of Jerusalem, who, with his Church, was tolerated in the Mahometan city by the magnanimous Sultan Saladin, in virtue of a solemnly ratified treaty, meditates treacherous plans against the Sultan, concocts intrigues against him :

“ But what is villainy in human eyes  
May, in the sight of God, the patriarch think,  
Not be villainy.”

For Nathan, he desires to kindle a pyre, because he has fostered, loved, and brought up to be a lovely, intellectual damsel, a forsaken Christian

child. Without the compassion of the Jew, the child would have perished :

“ That’s nothing ! The Jew must still be burnt.”

Daya, another representative of Church Christianity, who knows Recha’s Christian origin, has misgivings when she sees the Christian child basking in the warm love of a Jew. She is won over from these scruples by costly presents, but she still contemplates depriving Nathan of the most precious object to which his soul clings, even though danger should thereby befall him.

The Templar, Leon of Filnek, represents yet another phase of Christianity. A soldier and at the same time a cleric, who, after being pardoned by Saladin, although he had broken his word, has rescued Recha, the supposed Jewish maiden ; he behaves with Christian insolence towards Nathan, speaking roughly and harshly to him, whilst the latter is pouring forth his heartfelt gratitude to him for having saved his adopted daughter. Then, gradually, through the wonderful power of love, the Templar lays aside the coarse, hateful garb of Christian prejudice. In his veins there also flows Mahometan blood. The holy simplicity of the friar Bonafides, indeed, combines human kindness with monastic ecclesiasticism ; but he knows only one duty—obedience—and at the express command of the fanatically cruel Patriarch, would commit the most horrible crimes.

These lessons Lessing preached from his theatrical pulpit to the obdurate minds of the followers of Christ. The wise Jew, Nathan—Mendelssohn—has already arrived at the highest level of human sympathy ; while the best Christian, the Templar, like every cultivated Christian—such as the Nicolais, the Abts, the Herders—have yet to free themselves from their thick-skinned prejudices, in order to attain to that height. It was a mistaken



delusion to claim the possession of the one true religion and the only means of salvation. Who possesses the real ring? How can the real one be detected from the false? Only by meekness, sincere sympathy, true benevolence, and most fervent devotion to God; in short, by all those qualities which official Christianity of the time did not display, and which were perfectly realised in Mendelssohn.

In every way Lessing scourged fossilised, persecuting Christianity, and glorified Judaism through its chief representative. As if this splendid drama, the beautiful first-fruits of German poetry, was to belong to the Jews, although given to the world by a Christian poet, a son of Israel assisted in its production. Lessing, besieged by theological foes, and fighting against dire necessity, would not have been able to complete it, if, during its composition, he had not been enabled to live without anxiety. He required a loan, and found no helper among the Christians. Moses Wessely, in Hamburg, the brother of the Neo-Hebraic poet, Naphtali Wessely, who afterwards made a name for himself in Jewish history, advanced the desired sum, although he was not a wealthy Jew, but only wished to have the honour of possessing a document of Lessing's.

Lessing had not been wrong in thinking that this drama would vex pious Christians much more than ten controversial pamphlets against Göze. As soon as it made its public appearance (Spring, 1779), intense wrath was felt against the poet, as if he had destroyed Christianity. The "Fragments" and his polemics against Göze had not made him so many enemies as did "Nathan." His friends greeted him coldly, shunned him, excluded him from the social scenes he loved, and left him to the persecution of his adversaries. Through this silent excommunication he felt himself aggrieved, lost more and more of his bright

humour and elasticity of spirit, and became wearied, downcast and almost stupefied. This treatment from pious Christians terribly embittered the last year of his life. He died in his vigorous manhood like an aged man, a martyr to his love of truth. But his soul-conquering voice made itself heard on behalf of mutual tolerance, and gradually softened the discordant notes of hatred and prejudice. In spite of the ban which was placed upon "Nathan," as well as upon its author, both in Protestant and Catholic countries, this drama became one of the most popular in German poetry, and as often as the verses that were inspired by conviction resounded from the stage, they seized upon the hearts of the audience loosening the links of the chain of Jew-hatred in the minds of Germans, who found it a difficult task to throw off its shackles. "Nathan" made an impression on the consciousness of the German people, which, despite unfavourable circumstances, could not be obliterated. Twenty years before, when Lessing produced his first drama of "The Jews," an arrogant theologian maintained that it was altogether too improbable that among a people like the Jews, such a noble character could ever be formed. At the appearance of "Nathan" no reader doubted that such a noble Jew was possible. Even the most stubborn dared not assert so monstrous an absurdity. The Jewish ideal sage was a reality and lived in Berlin, and was an ornament not alone to the Jews, but at the same time to the German nation. Without Mendelssohn, the drama of "Nathan" would not have been written, just as without Lessing's friendship Mendelssohn would not have become what he did to German literature and the Jewish world. The cordiality of the intimacy between these two comrades showed itself after Lessing's death. His brothers and friends, who only after his demise

realised his whole greatness, turned with anguish at their loss to Mendelssohn, as if it were natural that he should be the chief mourner. And in very sooth he was; none of his associates preserved Lessing's memory with so sorrowful a remembrance and religious reverence. He was more solicitous to protect his former friend against misapprehension and slander than any of them.

Just as Mendelssohn, without knowing or desiring it, had stirred up Lessing to create an ideal, and through him had helped to dispel the bias against the Jews, so at the same time, without aiming at it, he had advanced the spiritual liberation of his race, from which their regeneration dates. The Bible, especially the Pentateuch—the all in all of the Jews—although very many of them knew it by heart, had become strange to them, as if it had been an unintelligible book. The Rabbinical and Kabbalistic expositors had so distorted the simple Biblical sense of the words, that everything in them was clear except the actual contents.

In the tender days of childhood, the Polish schoolmasters—there were no others—with rod and angry gestures, had instructed Jewish boys to discover the most absurd perversities in this Holy Book, translating it into their hateful jargon, and so overlaying the text with their own version, that it seemed as if Moses had spoken in the barbarous dialect of the Polish Jews.

The neglect of all secular knowledge, which increased with every century, had reached such a pitch that every folly and nonsensical oddity, even blasphemy, had been subtly read into the verses of Scripture. What had been intended as a comfort to the soul was changed into a poison. Mendelssohn acutely felt this ignorance and wresting of the words of the Bible, for he had arrived at the enlightened knowledge that the Holy Writ did not contain “that which Jews and



Christians believed they could find therein," and that a good and simple translation would be an important step towards the promotion of culture among the Jews. But in his modesty and diffidence, it did not occur to him to employ these means to educate his brethren. He compiled a translation of the Pentateuch only for his children, in order to give them a fitting education and to introduce the Word of God to them in an undisfigured form, without troubling (as he observed) "whether they would afterwards be compelled, in Saxe-Gotha, on every journey, to pay for their Jewish heads at a game of dice, or to tell the story of the Three Rings to every petty ruler." It was only at the urgent request of a man whose word carried weight with Mendelssohn, that he decided to publish his translation of the Pentateuch into German (with Jewish-German characters) for Jewish readers. It cost him an effort, however, to attach his name to it.

He knew his Jewish public too well not to understand that the translation, however excellently it might be done, would meet with little approval, unless it were accompanied by a Hebrew exposition. Of what value at this time, to the depraved taste of Jewish readers, was a book without a commentary? From time immemorial, since commentaries and supercommentaries came into existence, these were much more admired than the most beautiful text. Mendelssohn, therefore, obtained the assistance of an educated Pole, named Solomon Dubno, who, being a famous exception to his countrymen, and thoroughly acquainted with Hebrew grammar, was to undertake the composition of a running commentary. Thus the work was begun after securing the necessary subscribers, without whom no book could at that time be issued. It became apparent that Mendelssohn had already many supporters and admirers among his brethren, within and beyond Germany. His undertaking,

which was to remove from the Jews the reproach of ignorance in their own element, and of speaking a corrupt language, was hailed with joy. Most of the contributors came from Berlin and Mendelssohn's native town, Dessau, which was indeed proud of him. From Poland orders for the Germanised "Torah" also arrived, mostly from Wilna, where, at this time Elijah Wilna, to a certain extent an independent thinker, and the visionary perversities of the New Chassidim had drawn attention to the Holy Scriptures. As a sign of the times, it may also be noticed that the edition was purchased by Christians, such as Professors, Pastors, Court preachers, Consistorial Councillors, Court Councillors and the nobility. Mendelssohn's Christian friends were also extraordinarily active in promoting his work. Elisa Reimarus, Lessing's noble friend, herself collected subscriptions.

Glad as were the admirers of Mendelssohn to receive the news of a translation of the Pentateuch from his hand, the rigid adherents to antiquity and obsolete habit were equally disturbed. They felt vividly, without being able to think clearly about it, that the old times, with their ingenuous credulity—which regarded everything with unquestioned faith as an emanation from a Divine source—would now sink into the grave.

No sooner was a specimen of the translation published, than the Rabbis of the old school rose up, and determined to banish their enemy from the house of Jacob. To these opponents of Mendelssohn's enterprise belonged men who brought honour upon Judaism, not alone because of their Rabbinical scholarship and keen intellects, but also by their nobility of character. There were especially three men, Poles by birth, who had as little appreciation for the innovations of the times as for beauty of form and purity of speech. One of them, Ezekiel Landau (Chief Rabbi of Prague, from the

year 1752; died in 1793), enjoyed great respect both within and outside his community. He was a clever man, and learned in time to swim with the tide. The second, Raphael Cohen, the grandfather of Riesser (born 1722, died 1803), who had emigrated from Poland, and had been called from Posen to the Rabbinate of the three united communities of Hamburg, Altona, and Wandsbeck, was a firm and decided character, without guile or duplicity, and as judge, he meted out justice without respect to persons, considering justice as the support of the throne of God. The third and youngest was Hirsch Janow, a son-in-law of Raphael Cohen, who, on account of his profound acumen in Talmudical discussions, was called the "keen scholar" (born 1750, died 1785). His acute mind was equally versed in the intricate problems of mathematics as in those of the Talmud. He was perfectly disinterested, the trifling income that he received from the impoverished community of Posen he gave away to the unfortunate; he distributed alms with open-handed benevolence, and without asking questions whether the recipients were strictly orthodox or heretics, whilst he starved himself. He contracted debts in order to save the needy from misery. Solomon Maimon, a deep thinker, who had opportunities of knowing men from their worst side, called this Rabbi of Posen and Fürth "a godly man," which epithet is not to be considered as an exaggeration when coming from such lips. To these three Rabbis a fourth kindred spirit may be added, Phineas Levi Hurwitz (born 1740; died 1802), Rabbi of Frankfort-on-the-Maine, also a Pole, who was educated in the Chassidean school. These men, and others who thought like them, and who regarded the perusal of a German book as a grievous sin, were strictly within their right in opposing Mendelssohn's innovation. They perceived that the Jewish youth would learn more of the German lan-



guage from the Mendelssohnian translation than an understanding of the "Torah"; that the former would strongly tend to become the chief object of study; the attention to Holy Writ would degenerate into an unimportant secondary matter, whilst the study of the Talmud would be completely suppressed. And though Mendelssohn himself enjoyed a good repute from a religious point of view, his adherents and supporters were not invariably free from reproach. Sordid-minded men, who had broken with Judaism, and conceitedly termed themselves Mendelssohnians, were energetic in advancing the sale of the translation, and thus brought it into suspicion with the rigidly orthodox party.

Raphael Cohen, of Hamburg, a man hasty of temper, was the most zealous agitator against the German version of the Bible. But as Mendelssohn had relatives on his wife's side in this town, and also many admirers, no action could be taken against him there or in Prague, where there were already freethinkers among the Jews. Fürth therefore, was looked upon as the fittest place whence the interdict (about June, 1779) against "the German Pentateuch of Moses of Dessau" should be launched. All who remained true to Judaism were forbidden under penalty of excommunication, to use this translation.

Meanwhile the strife which had broken out between old and new Judaism was conducted with due calmness, and no violent symptoms were displayed. If Jacob Emden had been still alive, the contest would have raged more fiercely and evoked more disturbance. Mendelssohn was, in fact, too unselfish, too gentle and philosophically tranquil to take up arms on hearing of the ban pronounced against his undertaking, or to solicit the aid of his Christian friends of high rank in silencing his opponents. He was prepared for opposition. "As soon as I had yielded my translation to Dubno to be printed, I placed my soul in my hands, raised my eyes to the

mountains, and gave my back to the smiters." He regarded the play of human passions and excessive ardour for religion as a natural phenomenon, which demanded quiet observation. He did not wish to disturb this peaceful observation by external influence, by threats and prohibitions, or by the assistance of the temporal power. "Perhaps a little excitement is serviceable to the best interests of the enterprise that lies nearest to my heart." He suggested that if his version had been received without opposition, it would thus have proved its superfluity. "The more the so-called wise men of the day object to it, the more necessary is its existence. At first, I only intended it for ordinary people, but now I find that it is much more needful for Rabbis." On the part of his opponents, however, no important efforts were made to suppress his translation, which appeared to them so dangerous, or to denounce its author. Only in certain Polish towns, such as Posen and Lissa, was it forbidden; and it is said to have been publicly committed to the flames. Violent action was only to be feared from the indiscreet, resolute Rabbi Raphael Cohen. He seems, however, to have delayed action until the whole had appeared, in order to obtain proofs of deserved condemnation. Mendelssohn therefore sought timely help to counteract his zeal. He prevailed upon his friend, Augustus von Hennigs, a Danish State Councillor and brother-in-law of his intimate friend, Elisa Reimarus, to try to induce the King of Denmark and certain courtiers to become subscribers to the work; this would quench the ardour of the zealots. Hennigs, a man of hasty action, forthwith turned to the Danish Minister, Von Guldberg, to fulfil the request of Mendelssohn. To his astonishment and that of Mendelssohn, he received a straightforward reply, to the effect that the king and his illustrious brothers were prepared to sub-

scribe if their minister could assure them that the translation contained nothing against the inspiration and truth of the Holy Scriptures, so that the Jews should not afterwards say "that Moses Mendelssohn was an adherent to the (ill-famed) religion of Berlin."

This "Berlin religion" was at the time the terror of the orthodox, both in the Church and the Synagogue, and it can hardly be said that it was an idle fear. In order to keep at a distance this scoffing tendency against religion, the over-zealous Rabbis tried to block every possible avenue by which it might approach the houses of the Jews. Not merely subsequent events, but also the immediate present, proved that the Rabbis were not pursuing a phantom. Mendelssohn, in his harmless piety, did not recognise the enemy, although it passed to and fro through his own house. At length, the interdict against the translation of the Pentateuch by Mendelssohn was promulgated by Raphael Cohen (17th July); it was directed against all Jews who read the new version. The author himself was not excommunicated, either out of consideration for his importance, or from weakness and half-heartedness. Meanwhile, before this blow could fall, Mendelssohn had already warded off its consequences. He persuaded Von Hennigs to obtain the subscription of the king for the translation without any provisoes, which the latter succeeded in doing. At the head of the list of contributors stood the names of King Christian of Denmark and the Crown Prince. By these means Raphael Cohen was effectually foiled in his endeavours to condemn and destroy a work which he regarded as heretical.

His adversaries nevertheless struck Mendelssohn a blow, in order to hinder the completion of the translation. They succeeded in alienating Solomon Dubno, his right-hand man, which caused Mendelssohn serious perplexity. That his work might not



remain unfinished, he had to undertake the commentary to the Pentateuch himself, but felt so hard pressed that he was obliged to seek for assistants. In Wessely he found a co-operator of a similar disposition to his own; but even he could not undertake the whole burden of the work, and thus Mendelssohn was compelled to entrust a portion of it to the tutor of his son, Herz Homberg, and to another Pole, Aaron Jaroslav. The former was not altogether a congenial associate. He knew that Homberg in his heart was estranged from Judaism, and that he would not execute the holy work according to his method and as a sacred duty, as he himself felt it to be. But he had no other alternative. Owing to Homberg's participation in the work, the translation, which was finished in 1783, was discredited by the orthodox; and they desired to exclude it altogether from Jewish houses.

This severity roused all the more excitement among the opposite faction. Forbidden fruit tastes sweet. Youthful students of the Talmud seized upon the German translation behind the backs of their masters, who ignored the new influence, and learned concurrently in secret the most elementary and the most sublime lessons—the German language and the philosophy of religion, Hebrew grammar and poetry. Through it a new view of the world was opened to them. The Hebrew Commentary served as their guide, and unlocked their understanding. As if touched by a magic wand, there grew upon this band of students, these fossilised forms of the musty Talmudical schoolhouses, intellectual wings upon which they soared above the gloomy present and took their flight heavenwards. An insatiable desire for knowledge took possession of them; no territory, however dark, remained inaccessible to them. The acumen, quick comprehension, and profound penetration which these

pupils had acquired in their close study of the Talmud, rendered it easy for them to take their position in the newly-discovered world. Thousands of students of the Talmud from the different great schools of Hamburg, Prague, Nicolsburg, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, Fürth, and even from Poland, once more regained their youth as little Mendelssohns; many of them eloquent, profound thinkers, and with them Judaism too renewed its youth. All who, towards the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, were in various ways public workers, and had up to this time been one-sided Talmudists, were now first inspired by the spirit of Mendelssohn to become the adherents and promoters of culture among the Jews. In a very short space of time a numerous band of Jewish authors arose, who wrote in a clear Hebrew or German style upon matters of which shortly before they had no knowledge. The Mendelssohnian translation had facilitated a veritable renaissance of the Jews with rapid strides. They found their level in European civilisation quicker than the Germans, and—what should not be overlooked—their Talmudical schooling had sharpened their intelligence. Mendelssohn's Paraphrase of the Psalms, in addition to the Pentateuch, has produced more good than that of Luther, because instead of fossilising, it animated the mind. The inner freedom of the Jews, as has been said, dates from this translation.

The beginning of the outward liberation of the Jews from the cruel bondage of thousands of years was also connected with the name of Mendelssohn, and like his activity for their internal freedom, was brought about unconsciously, without stir or calculation. It appears like a miracle, only no marvellous occurrence accompanied it. It produced two advocates for the Jews, than whom none more zealous or warmer could be desired: these were Lessing and

Dohm. Since the middle of the eighteenth century the attention of the cultured world had assumed a more favourable attitude towards the Jews without any action on their part.

In the first place Montesquieu, who first penetrated to the profound depths of human laws and revealed their spirit, had raised his weighty voice against the barbarous treatment of the Jews. In his widely-read "Spirit of the Laws"—a work that led many to reflect on the questions discussed—he had demonstrated, with convincing arguments, the harm that the ill-treatment of the Jews had caused to States, and he had branded the cruelty of the Inquisition with an ineradicable stigma. The piercing cry of agony of a tortured Marrano at the sight of a stake prepared for a "Judaising" maiden of eighteen years of age in Lisbon had aroused Montesquieu, and the echo of his voice resounded throughout Europe.

"You Christians complain that the Emperor of China roasts all the Christians in his dominions over a slow fire. You behave much worse towards the Jews because they do not believe as you do. If any of our descendants would ever venture to say that the nations of Europe were cultured, your example could be adduced to prove that they were barbarians. The picture that they will draw of you will certainly stain your age and spread abroad a hatred of all your contemporaries."

Montesquieu had again discovered the true idea of justice, which mankind had lost. But how difficult was it to cause this idea to be fully recognised with reference to the Jews!

Two events had brought the Jews and their concerns before the public notice—their present and their past: their demand for a legal standing in England, and Voltaire's attacks upon them. In England, where a century before they had as it were crept in, they formed an exclusive community, especially in the capital, although not tolerated or recognised by any express law. They were regarded merely as foreigners—as Spaniards, Portu-



guese, Dutchmen or Germans, and had to pay a tax called alien duty. Meanwhile the authorities, especially the judges, showed regard for the Jewish belief; for instance, they did not summon Jewish witnesses on the Sabbath. After the Jews who had settled in the American colonies of England had been naturalised, a Bill was presented in Parliament by merchants and manufacturers, mostly Jews and their friends, that they might also be treated as natives of England, without being compelled by the law to take the Sacrament in order to obtain civil rights. Pelham, the minister, supported the petition, and pointed out the advantages that would accrue to the country by the large capital of the Portuguese Jews and their warm attachment to England. By their opponents, however, partly self-interest, and partly religious prejudices were brought to bear against them. It was urged that if they were placed on an equal footing with English citizens the Jews would acquire the whole wealth of the kingdom, would obtain possession of landed property and disinherit Christians: the latter would be their slaves, and the Jews would choose their own rulers and kings. Simple Bible orthodoxy argued that according to Christian prophecies they were to remain without a home until they were gathered to the land of their fathers. Surprisingly enough, the Bill was passed by the Upper House that all Jews, who had resided in England or Ireland for three consecutive years, might acquire naturalisation; but they were not to occupy any secular or clerical office, nor to receive the Parliamentary franchise. The Lords and the Bishops were not opposed to the Jews. The majority of the Lower House also agreed to the Bill, and King George II. ratified it (March, 1753). Was the decision of the Three Estates really the expression of the majority of the nation? This at once became doubtful, imprecations were imme-

diately thundered from pulpits, guilds, and the merchants against the Ministry who had passed the Naturalisation Act for the Jews. In our days it seems hardly credible that the London merchants should have feared the ruin of their trade by the influx of Jewish capitalists. Deacon Josiah Tucker, who took the part of the Jews and had defended the Naturalisation Act, was attacked by the Opposition in Parliament, in the newspapers and pamphlets, and his effigy, together with his Defence of the Jews, were burnt in Bristol. To the vexation of the more liberal-minded, the Ministry were weak enough to yield to the clamour of the populace that arose from mercantile jealousy and fanatical intolerance, and to annul their own work (1754) "because it had provoked displeasure, and the minds of many loyal subjects had been disquieted thereby." For even the most violent enemies of the law could not impute anything evil to the Jews of England; they created a good impression upon Englishmen by their riches, which had been accumulated without usury, and by their noble bearing, and thus public opinion warmly sided with them and their claims for civil equality; and if for the moment these were nullified, yet no unfavourable result ensued.

The second occurrence, although originating in an isolated personality, roused even more attention than had the action of the English Parliament towards the Jews. This person was Arouet de Voltaire, king in the domain of literature in the eighteenth century, who with his demoniacal laughter blew down like a house of cards the stronghold of the Middle Ages, which still lifted its head aloft. He, who believed neither in Providence nor in the moral progress of mankind, was the instrument of the impulse given to history, and for the advancement of progress. Voltaire—who in his writings was an entrancing wizard and a guide, and in his life a fool and a slave of base passions—

picked a quarrel with the Jews and sneered at them and their past. His hostile attitude towards them arose from personal ill-humour and irritability. During his stay in London he related that he lost eighty per cent. of a loan of 25,000 francs, through the bankruptcy of a Jewish capitalist named Medina. He cannot however always be believed.

“ Medina told me that he was not to blame for his bankruptcy : that he was unfortunate, that he had never been a son of Belial. He moved me, I embraced him, we praised God together, and I lost my money. I have never hated the Jewish nation ; I hate nobody.”

Yet, like a low-minded Harpagon, who clung to his money, Voltaire, on account of this large or small loss, hated not only the Jews, but all people upon the earth. A second incident excited him still more against them. When Voltaire was in Berlin and Potsdam as Court poet, assistant and friend to King Frederick, who both admired and detested this diabolical genius, he gave a filthy commission to a Jewish jeweller, named Hirsch, or Hirschel (1750), which he afterwards, at the instigation of a rival in the trade, named Ephraim Veitel, wished to withdraw. Friction thus arose between Voltaire and Hirschel, until some arrangement was made, which the former afterwards desired to evade. In a word, Voltaire practised a series of mean tricks upon his Jewish tradesman : deceived him about some diamonds, dealt treacherously with him, forged documents, at the same time acting as if he were the injured party. At length a complicated lawsuit sprang from these proceedings. King Frederick, who had obtained information of all this from legal documents, and from a pamphlet, written presumably by Hirsch, which contained the charges of Voltaire's enemies against him, was highly enraged with this scamp, who was both a poet and philosopher. Unable to countenance his actions, the king resolved to banish him from Prussia, and



wrote against him a comedy in French verse, called "Tantalus in the Lawsuit." Voltaire's dealings with the Prussian Jew created a sensation, and provided ample material for the mischievous delight of his opponents.

Next to avarice, revenge was a prominent feature in his character. It was as though he felt that it was too trifling a matter for Voltaire to avenge himself upon the individual Jew who had brought about his humiliation, but determined to make the whole Jewish nation feel his hatred. Whenever he had an opportunity of speaking of Judaism or Jews, he bespattered the Jews of the past and the present with his obscene satire. This also accorded with his method of warfare. Christianity, which he thoroughly hated and despised, could not be attacked openly without rendering the aggressor liable to severe punishment. Judaism, the parent of Christianity, therefore served as the target, against which he hurled his elegant, lightly brandished, but venomous darts. In one of his essays particularly he poured forth his gall against Jews and Judaism.

This partial and superficial judgment of the Jews, this assault upon a whole people, and a history of a thousand years, irritated many truth-loving men; but as yet no one had dared to provoke a quarrel with so dreaded an antagonist as Voltaire. A certain risk was attached to this temerity, but it was hazarded by a cultured Jew, named Isaac Pinto, more from skilfully-calculated motives than from annoyance at Voltaire's baseless defamation. Pinto (born in Bordeaux, 1715; died in Amsterdam, 1787) belonged to a Portuguese Marrano family, was rich, cultivated, noble and disinterested in his own affairs; but suffered from a pardonable egoism, namely, on behalf of the community. After leaving Bordeaux he had settled in Amsterdam, where he not only performed services to the Portuguese congre-

gations, but also advanced large sums of money to the States of Holland, and therefore held an honourable position. He always took a warm interest in the congregation in which he had been born, and assisted it by word and deed. But his heart was most devoted to the Portuguese Jews, his brethren by race and speech, and on the other hand, he was indifferent and cold towards the Jews who spoke the German and Polish tongues; he looked down upon them with disdainful pride, as Christians of rank did upon lowly Jews. Nobility of mind, and pride of race, were intimately combined in Pinto. In certain unpleasant matters in which the Portuguese community of Bordeaux had become entangled, he displayed on the one hand, ardent zeal, and on the other, hardness of heart. In this flourishing commercial town, since the middle of the sixteenth century there had flourished a congregation of fugitive Marranos, who had fled from the prisons and the auto-da-fés of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisition. These refugees had brought with them considerable capital and an industrious spirit, and had thus secured the right of residence and certain privileges, but only under the name of new-Christians or Portuguese merchants. For a long time they were forced to maintain this dissimulation, and to have the marriage benediction bestowed upon them in the churches. Their numbers gradually increased; in two centuries (1550—1750) the congregation of Bordeaux had grown to 200 families, or 500 souls. The majority of the Portuguese Jews, or new-Christians, of Bordeaux kept large banking-houses, engaged in the manufacture of arms, equipped ships, or undertook transmarine business with French colonies. To their importance as merchants and ship-owners they united firm uprightness, blameless honesty in business, liberality towards Jews and non-Jews, and a dignified attitude which they had brought with them from the Pyrenean

peninsula, their unnatural mother-country. Thus they gained respect and distinction among the Christian inhabitants of Bordeaux, and the French Court as well as the high officials, connived at their presence and gradually came to recognise them as Jews. The important mercantile town also attracted German Jews from Alsace, and French Jews from Avignon, which district was still under Papal government, and where, by paying sums of money, they obtained a right to settle. At this the Portuguese Jews were jealous; they feared that they would be placed on a level with these co-religionists, who were little educated, and who engaged in petty trading or monetary transactions, and that their honourable reputation would disappear. Induced by these selfish motives they exerted themselves to cause the immigrant German and Avignonese Jews to be expelled from the town, by appealing to the old edict that Jews might not dwell in France. But the exiles contrived to obtain the protection of an influential person at Court, and thus prolonged their stay. Through the connivance of the authorities, 152 foreign Jews had already flocked to Bordeaux, several of whom had powerful friends. This was a thorn in the side of the Portuguese, and in order to counteract the inroad of strangers, they united in passing (1760) a stringent communal law against their foreign co-religionists. This branded every foreign Jew not of Portuguese origin as a vagrant and a beggar, and as a burden to those who were wealthy. They calumniated the strangers, asserting that they followed a dishonourable, fraudulent occupation, and thereby predisposed the citizens and authorities against them. According to their proposal, Portuguese Jews, or their securities, could remain, whilst the foreign Jews, or "vagrants," were to leave the town in three days. This cruel and heartless statute had to be confirmed by the king, Louis XV. It was no difficulty for this



Monarch, who was ruled by his wives and his courtiers, to perform the most inhuman acts. A friend and kinsman of Isaac Pinto undertook to render this law acceptable to the Court.

This was Jacob Rodrigues Pereira (born in Spain, 1715; died in Paris, 1780), grandfather of the famous and enterprising Emile and Isaac Pereira, a man of talent and noble character, and an artist of original mind, who had obtained wide renown. He had succeeded in inventing a language of signs for the deaf and dumb, and in teaching these unfortunate people a means of expressing their thoughts. As a Marrano, he had taught the deaf and dumb in Spain. Love for the religion of his ancestors, or hatred of the bloodthirsty Catholic Church impelled him to leave the land of the Inquisition (about 1734), and, together with his mother and sister, to journey to Bordeaux. Here even earlier than the time of Abbé de l'Épée, he had so thoroughly verified his theory for the instruction of those born dumb, in a specially appointed school, that the king ordered a reward to be given to him, and the first men of science—D'Alembert, Buffon, Diderot and Rousseau, lavished praises upon him. Pereira afterwards became royal interpreter and member of the Royal Society in London. The Portuguese community of Bordeaux by appointing him their representative in Paris hoped to ventilate their complaints through him and to accomplish their ends. This man, who was so greatly moved with sympathy for the unfortunate, was yet filled with communal egoism, so that he did not hesitate to inflict injury upon his German and Avignonese co-religionists. The commission he had received to secure the ratification of the proposed statute of Louis XV. he carried out but too conscientiously. But in the disorderly method of government of this king and his Court there was a vast difference between the passing and the administering of a law.

The higher officials were able to circumvent or defer any law. The expulsion of the Jews of German and Avignonese origin from Bordeaux lay in the hands of the Governor, the Duc de Richelieu. Isaac Pinto, who was on intimate terms with him, was able to win his support. Richelieu issued an urgent command (November, 1761) that, within fourteen days, all foreign Jews should be banished from Bordeaux. Exception was only made in favour of two old men and women whom the hardships of the expulsion would have killed, and of a man who had been of service to the town (Jacob de Perpignan). All the rest were plunged into distress, which was the worse for them, as it was forbidden to Jews to settle anywhere in France, and the districts and towns where Jews already dwelt admitted no new comers. What a difference between the German Jew, Moses Mendelssohn and the Portuguese Jews, Isaac Pinto and Rodrigues Pereira, who are placed side by side at this period! The former did not cease his efforts, and through his influence he brought help to his unhappy brethren, or at least had offered comfort to them. For the Jews in Switzerland, who were only tolerated in two small towns, and even there were so enslaved that they must have died out, Mendelssohn procured some alleviation of their sufferings through his opponent, Lavater. Several hundred Jews were about to be expelled from Dresden because they could not pay the poll-tax laid upon them. Through Mendelssohn's intercession with one of his numerous admirers, the Cabinet Councillor, Von Ferber, the unfortunate people obtained permission to remain in Dresden. To a Jewish Talmudical scholar who had been unjustly suspected of theft and imprisoned in Leipsic, Mendelssohn cleverly contrived to send a letter of consolation into the prison, whereby he gained his freedom. Isaac Pinto and Jacob Pereira, on the

other hand, employed all their zeal in expelling their brethren by race and religion, and in adding to what Mendelssohn considered was the hardest punishment of the Jews, "and is equal to annihilation from the face of God's earth, over which persecution scatters them with armed hand from every border."

The cruel proceedings of the Portuguese Jews against their brethren in Bordeaux made a great stir. If Jews might not tarry in France, why should their Portuguese brethren be tolerated? The latter therefore saw themselves compelled to appear in a more favourable light, and requested Isaac Pinto, who had already appeared in public and possessed literary culture, to write a sort of vindication for them, and make clear the wide difference between Jews of Portuguese descent and those of other lands. Pinto consented, or rather followed his own inclination, and for this purpose prepared the "Reflections" upon Voltaire's defamation of Judaism (1762). He told this reckless calumniator that the crime of libelling single individuals was increased when the false accusations affected a whole nation, and reached its highest degree when directed against a people insulted by all men, and by endeavours to make all responsible for the misdeeds of a few. These people indeed, owing to their dispersion, have assumed the character of the inhabitants of the country in which they lived. An English Jew as little resembles his co-religionist of Constantinople as the latter does a Chinese mandarin; the Jew of Bordeaux and one of Metz are two utterly different beings. Nevertheless, Voltaire had indiscriminately condemned them, and sketched a representation of them as absurd as it was untrue. Voltaire, who felt himself called upon to extirpate prejudices, had in fact lent his pen to the greatest of them. He indeed hinted that they should be



burnt, but a number of the Jews would rather be burnt than be so calumniated. "The Jews are not more ignorant, more barbarous, or superstitious than other nations, and least of all do they merit the accusation of avarice." Voltaire owed a duty to the Jews, to his century, to truth, and to posterity who would appeal to his authority when abusing and trying to crush an exceedingly unhappy people.

Meanwhile, as already said, it was not so much Pinto's aim to vindicate the whole of the Jewish world against Voltaire's revengeful charges as to place his nearer kinsmen, the Portuguese or Sephardic Jews, in a more favourable light. To this end, he showed the wide gulf existing between them and those of other extraction, especially the German and Polish Jews. He averred, with great exaggeration, that in the event of a Sephardic Jew in England or Holland wedding a German Jewess, he would be excluded from the community by his relatives, and would not even find a resting-place in their cemetery. This arose from the fact that the Portuguese Jews traced their lineage from the noblest families of the tribe of Judah, and that their noble descent had of old in Spain and Portugal been an impulse to great virtues and a protection against vice and crime. Among them no traces of the wickedness or evil deeds of which Voltaire accused them were to be found. On the contrary, they had brought wealth to the States which received them, especially to Holland. Of the German and Polish Jews, however, Pinto spoke somewhat less highly. He, indeed excused their not over honourable trades and despicable actions, by the overwhelming sufferings, the slavery and humiliation which they had endured and were still enduring. He succeeded in obtaining what he had desired. In reply, Voltaire paid compliments to him and the Portuguese Jews, and admitted that he had done wrong in attacking

them, but nevertheless continued to write against Jewish antiquity.

Pinto's letter of defence attracted great attention. The public press, both French and English, pronounced a favourable judgment, and accepted it as the answer of the Jews against Voltaire's condemnatory estimate of them. They, however, blamed the method of Pinto, inasmuch as he had been too partial to the Portuguese, and too strongly opposed to the German and Polish Jews, and, like Voltaire, had passed sentence upon them all indiscriminately, because of the behaviour of a few individuals. A Catholic priest, under a Jewish disguise, took up the cause of Hebrew antiquity. He addressed "Jewish Letters" to Voltaire, pretending that they came from Portuguese and German Jews, these were well meant but badly composed. They were widely read, and contributed in turning the current of public opinion in favour of the Jews against Voltaire's savage attacks. They did not fail to remind him that owing to the loss of money which he had sustained through one Jew that he had attacked the whole race with his anger. This friendly pamphlet on behalf of the Jews being written in French, then the fashionable language of the day, was extensively read and discussed, and found a favourable echo in the minds of men.

A movement for the defence of the Jews to elevate them from their servile position was set on foot through a mode of persecution which humane thinkers of the time considered to be a surprising and unexpected occurrence, but which had often been employed in the midst of Christian nations. This persecution kindled passions on both sides, and awakened men to activity. In no part of Europe, perhaps, was the oppression and abasement of the Jews greater than in the German province of Alsace, in which Metz may be reckoned, but which had become French. All causes of in-

veterate Jew-hatred, clerical intolerance, racial antipathy, lawlessness of the nobility, mercantile jealousy, and brute ignorance were combined against the Jews of Alsace, in order to render their existence in this century of enlightenment a continual hell. The oppression was, nevertheless, so paltry in its nature that it could never stimulate the Jews to offer a heroic resistance. The German populace of this province, like Germans in all times, clung most tenaciously to their hatred of the Jews. Both the nobles and citizens of Alsace turned a deaf ear to the voice of humanity, which spoke so eloquently from French literature, and they would not abate one jot of their legal rights over the Jews, who were treated as serfs. In Alsace there lived about three to four thousand Jewish families (from fifteen to twenty thousand souls). It was, however, in the power of the nobility to admit new families or expel old ones. In Metz, on the other hand, the merchants had secured the right of preventing the Jews from exceeding the number of four hundred and eighty families. This condition of affairs had the same consequences as in Austria and Prussia: the younger sons were condemned to celibacy, or to exile from their paternal home, and the daughters to remain unmarried. In fact, it was still worse than in Austria and elsewhere, because the German citizens carefully looked to the observance of these rigorous Pharaonic laws, and the French officials watched stealthily lest any attempt was made to show indulgence towards the unfortunate people. Naturally the Jews of Alsace and Metz were enclosed in Ghettos, and could only pass occasionally through the other parts of the towns. For these privileges they were compelled to pay exorbitant taxes.

Louis XIV. had presented a portion of his income derived from the Jews of Metz as a gift to the Duc de Brancas and to the Countess de Fontaine. They had to pay to these persons a sum of 20,000 livres



annually; besides poll-taxes, trade-taxes, house-taxes, contributions to churches and hospitals, war-taxes, and exactions of every sort under any other name.

In Alsace they were obliged to pay protection-money to the king, tribute to the Bishop of Strasburg, and to the Duke of Hagenau, besides residence-taxes to the nobles in whose feudal territory they dwelt, and war-taxes. The privilege of residence here did not descend to the eldest son, but had to be purchased from the nobleman, as if the son were a foreign applicant for protection. The Jews had to win the good opinion, not alone of their lord, but also of his officers, by rich gifts at New Year, and on other occasions. And whence could they procure all these moneys, and still support their synagogues and schools?

Almost every handicraft and trade was forbidden them in Alsace: they could only engage legally in cattle-dealing, or in trading in gold and silver. In Metz the Jews were only allowed to kill such animals as were required for private consumption, and the appointed slaughterers had to keep a list of the animals slain. If they wished to make a journey outside their narrow province, they had to pay a poll-tax, and were subjected to the vexations of passports. In Strasburg, the capital of the province, no Jew could remain over night. What else remained to them than to obtain the money indispensable for their wretched existence in an illegal way—through usury? Those who possessed money, made advances to the small tradesmen, farmers, and vinedressers, at the risk of losing the amounts lent, and demanded high interest, or employed other artifices to secure payment. This only caused them to be more hated, and the growing impoverishment of the people was attributed to them, and was the source of their unspeakable sufferings. They were

in the sad position of being compelled to make themselves and others unhappy.

This miserable condition of the Alsatian Jews a villainous man sought to turn to his own advantage, and he almost brought on a sanguinary persecution. A lawyer, not without brains and literary culture, named Hell, belonging to a poor family, and ardently wishing for a high position, being acquainted with the devices of the Jewish usurers, actually learned the Hebrew language in order, by threats of disclosure, to be able to levy blackmail on them. He sent threatening letters in Hebrew, saying that the Jews would inevitably be accused of usury and deception if they did not supply him with a stated sum of money. This worthless lawyer afterwards became district judge to several Alsatian noblemen, and thus the Jews were given into his power. Those who did not satisfy his continually increasing demands, were accused, ill-treated and condemned. In the meantime his unjust conduct was partially exposed: he was suspected, and became excited against the Jews of Alsace. He resolved to devise a plan to arouse fanaticism against them. He pointed out to debtors a way by which they could escape the oppressive debts which they owed to the Jewish money-lenders, by producing false receipts as for payments already rendered. Some of his creatures travelled through Alsace and wrote out such acquittances. Conscientious debtors had their scruples silenced by the clergy, who assured them that robbing the Jews was a righteous act. The really honest people were pacified by a rogue who was especially despatched for that purpose, and who distributed orders and crosses, presumably in the name of the king, to those who accepted and presented the false receipts, and who were ready to come forward and accuse the Jews of oppression and duplicity. Thus there arose a menacing ferment against the Jews of Alsace,

bordering on actual violence. The debtors united with common ruffians and clergymen to implore the weak-minded king, Louis XVI., to put an end to all disturbances, by expelling the Jews from Alsace. In order to crown his work, the villainous district magistrate strove to exasperate the populace against the Jews of Alsace. He composed a venomous work against them (1779), "Observations of an Alsatian upon the Present Affairs of the Jews of Alsace," in which he collected all the slanderous accusations against Jews from ancient times, in order to present a repulsive picture of them, and expose them to hatred and extermination. In this work he admitted that the receipts had been forged, but this was in consequence of the decrees of Providence, to whom alone vengeance was becoming. They hoped by these means to avenge the crucifixion of Jesus, the murder of God. This district judge aimed at the annihilation, or at least the expulsion of the Jews. Meanwhile, the spirit of toleration had already acquired sufficient strength to prevent the success of such cunning designs. The trick was revealed, and, at the command of the king, Hell was imprisoned and afterwards banished from Alsace. A decree of the Sovereign ordered (May, 1780) that lawsuits against usurers should no longer be decided by the district courts of the nobility, but by the chief Councillor, or State Councillor (Conseil Souverain) of Alsace.

One result of these occurrences was that the Alsatian Jews finally roused themselves, and ventured to state aloud that their position was intolerable, and to entreat relief from the throne of the gentle king, Louis XVI. Their representative (Cerf Berr?) drew up a memorial to the State Council upon the inhuman laws under which they groaned, and made proposals for the amelioration of their lot. They felt, however, that this memorial



should be so arranged that it should influence public opinion, which at this time was almost as powerful as the king himself. But in their midst there was no man of spirit and ability who could compose a fitting description of their condition.

To whom then could they turn except to Mendelssohn, who was now looked upon by European Jews as their advocate and powerful supporter in distress? To him, therefore, the Alsatian Jews—or, more correctly their distinguished representative Cerf Berr, who knew Mendelssohn—applied with the request, that he would give the necessary polish and an impressive form to their petition for protection. Mendelssohn had neither the leisure, nor perhaps the skill to carry out their request. But fortunately at this time he had found a new friend and admirer, who, owing to his knowledge and position, was better able to formulate such a memorial. Christian William Dohm (b. 1751, d. 1820), owing to his thorough knowledge of history, had shortly before been appointed by Frederick the Great—with the title of Military Councillor—to superintend the Archives. Like all assiduous youths and men of the time who frequented Berlin, Dohm had also sought out the Jewish philosopher's circle, and Mendelssohn, who was at this time at the summit of his fame; and like all who entered, Dohm felt himself attracted by his intellectuality, gentleness and great wisdom. During his stay in Berlin he was a regular visitor at the house of Mendelssohn, who, on Saturday, his day of leisure, always assembled his friends around him. Every cultivated Christian who came near Mendelssohn was pleasantly affected by him, his bias against the Jews was overcome, and he experienced a feeling of mingled admiration and sympathy for a race that had endured so much suffering, and had produced such a personality. Dohm had already

thrown aside his innate or acquired antipathy against the Jews. His interest in mankind was not based upon the fluctuating ground of Christian love, but upon the firm soil of human culture, characteristic of the eighteenth century, and which included also this unhappy people. He had already prepared a plan to make the "history of the Jewish nation since the destruction of their own State" the subject of his studies. ←

Dohm evinced his readiness to draw up the memorial for the Alsatian Jews in a pleasing form, in conjunction with Mendelssohn. Whilst engaged on this task, the thought struck him not alone to publish a plea for protection for the few, but on behalf of all the German Jews, who suffered under similar oppression. Thus originated his never-to-be-forgotten work, "Upon the Civil Amelioration of the Condition of the Jews" (finished Aug., 1781), the first real step towards removing the heavy yoke from the neck of the Jews. With this pamphlet, like Lessing with his "Nathan," Dohm partly atoned for the guilt of the German nation in enslaving and degrading the Jews. ←

Dohm's apology has no clerical tinge about it, but was addressed to sober, enlightened statesmen, and laid particular stress upon the political advantages which would ensue. The noble philanthropist who first pleaded for the emancipation of the negroes had fewer difficulties to overcome than Dohm in his efforts for the freedom of the Jews. The very circumstances that ought to have spoken in their favour, their intelligence and activity, their contrast to Christian nations in their pure doctrines of God and morality, their ancient nobility—all tended to their detriment. Their intellectual and energetic habits were described as cunning and love of gain; their insistence upon the origin of their dogmas as presumption and infidelity, and their ancient nobility as pride. It is difficult to over-estimate the heroism which

\* rational  
 criticism  
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 the Jews

was required to speak a word on their behalf, in face of the numerous prejudices and the sentiments against the Jews prevailing among all classes of Christian society.

→ In his apology Dohm, as already noted, omitted all reference to the religious point of view, and dwelt solely upon the political and national aspect. He started by asserting that it was a universal conviction that the welfare of States depended upon the increasing number of the population. To this end many governments spent large sums of money to attract new citizens from foreign countries. An exception was only made in the case of the Jews. "Almost in all parts of Europe the tendency of the laws and the whole constitution of the State is to prevent, as far as possible, the increase of these unfortunate Asiatic refugees. Residence is either altogether denied them or only granted, at a fixed sum, for a short time. A large proportion of Jews thus find the gates of every town closed against them; they are inhumanly driven away from every border, and nothing is left to them except to starve, or to save themselves from starvation by crime. Every guild would think itself dishonoured if it admitted a Jew as a member; therefore in almost every country the Hebrews are debarred from handicrafts and mechanical arts. It is only a few men of genius who, amidst such terribly oppressive circumstances, still retain courage and serenity of mind to devote themselves to the fine arts and sciences. And these rare men, who have attained to a high degree of excellence, as well as those who are an honour to mankind through their irreproachable righteousness, can only meet with respect from a few: among the majority the most distinguished merits of soul and heart can never atone for the error of 'being a Jew.' What reasons can indeed have induced the governments of European States to be so unanimous in this attitude



towards the Jewish nation?" asked Dohm. Ought, perchance, industrious and good citizens to be less useful to the State because they originally came from Asia, and were distinguished by a beard, by circumcision, and their own form of worshipping God? If the Jewish religion contained harmful propositions, then the exclusion of its adherents and the contempt felt for them could be justified; but it was not so. "The mob, which considers itself at liberty to deceive a Jew, falsely asserts that, according to his law, he is permitted to cheat the adherents of another creed, and persecuting priests have spread stories of the prejudices felt by the Jews, and thus revealed their own. The chief book of the Jews, the Law of Moses, is regarded with reverence also by Christians."

Dohm thereupon drew up a summary of the past history of the Jews in Europe—how, in the first centuries, they had enjoyed full civil rights in the Roman Empire, and must have been considered worthy of such privileges—how they were first degraded and deprived of their rights by the Byzantines, and then by the German barbarians, especially by the Visigoths in Spain. From the Roman Empire the Jews retained more culture than the dominant nations possessed; they were not brutalised through savage feuds, nor was their progress retarded by monkish philosophy and superstition. In Spain amongst the Jews and the Arabs there existed a more remarkable culture than in Christian Europe. Dohm then reviewed the false accusations and persecutions against the Jews in the Middle Ages, painting the Christians as cruel barbarians and the Jews as illustrious martyrs. After touching upon the condition of the Jews in the various States, he concluded his delineation with the words:

"These principles of exclusion that are equally opposed to humanity and politics, and which bear the impress of the dark centuries, are un-

worthy of the enlightenment of our times, and deserve no longer to be followed. It is possible that several errors have become so deeply rooted that they will only disappear altogether in the third or fourth generation. But this is no argument against beginning to reform now ; because, without such beginning, a better generation can never appear."

Dohm also suggested a plan whereby the amelioration of the condition of the Jews might be facilitated, and his new proposals formed a programme for the future. In the first place, they were to receive equal rights with all other subjects. In particular, liberty of occupation and freedom in procuring a livelihood should be conceded to them, so that, by wise precautions, they would be drawn away from petty trading and usury, and be attracted to handicrafts, agriculture, arts and sciences ; but all this should be effected without compulsion. The moral elevation of the Jews would be promoted by the foundation of good schools of their own, or by the admission of their youth into Christian schools, just as it would be advanced by the elevation of the minds of adults in the Jewish Houses of Prayer. But it should also be impressed upon Christians, through the medium of sermons and other effectual means, that they were to regard and treat the Jews as brothers and fellow-men. Dohm desired to see freedom in their private religious affairs granted them ; free exercise of religion, the establishment of synagogues, the appointment of teachers, maintenance of their poor, all under the supervision of the government. The power of excluding refractory members from the community should also be given to them. Dohm, moreover, pleaded for the continuance of independent jurisdiction in cases between Jews, the power to be vested in a tribunal of Rabbis, under certain restrictions. He only wished to debar them from one privilege, applying for public offices or entering the arena of politics. The ability to undertake these duties, he suggested, was completely lacking

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in that generation, and would not manifest itself very conspicuously in the next. Otherwise, there was rather a superabundance than a deficiency in material for competent statesmen. For this reason, for the present, it would be better both for the State and the Jews, if they worked in warehouses and behind the plough rather than in State offices. But subsequent experience speedily disproved his doubts.

Dohm foresaw that his programme for the emancipation of the Jews would meet with violent and stubborn opposition from the clergy and the theological school. He therefore submitted it to the "wisdom of the governments," who at this time were more inclined to further progress and enlightenment than the various nations of Europe. Dohm was thoroughly filled with the seriousness and importance of his task; he was positive that his proposals would not only lay the basis for the welfare of the Jews, but also for that of the States. It is not to be overlooked that Mendelssohn stood behind him; and even if he did not dictate the words which were penned, yet he breathed into them some of his own spirit of gentleness and love of mankind, and illumined those points which were strange and dark to Christians and political writers. Mendelssohn is therefore to be looked upon, if not as the father, still as the godfather of Dohm's work.

It was inevitable that such a treatise should create a great excitement in Germany. Must not this demand to treat the Jews as equals have appeared to respectable Christians as a monstrous thing; as if it were suggested to the nobility to place themselves at the same table with their slaves? Soon after its appearance, Dohm's work advocating Jewish emancipation became extraordinarily popular; it was read, discussed, criticised and refuted by many, and only approved by a few. The first rumour circulated was that Dohm had sold his pen

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to the Jews for a very high price, although he had specially entreated protection for the poor pedlars, who could boast of no home anywhere. Fortune began to smile upon the Jews after it had turned its back upon them for so many centuries. Scarcely had the pamphlet appeared, when the Emperor Joseph, the first Austrian ruler who had in some degree allowed himself to be guided by moral and humane principles, after having snapt asunder the yoke of the Catholic Church and having accorded a Toleration Edict to the Protestants, issued a series of laws relating to the Jews, which displayed a sincere if rather fierce philanthropy.

By this new departure (19th October, 1781), the Jews were permitted to learn handicrafts, arts, sciences and also agriculture, with certain restrictions. The doors of the universities and academies, hitherto closed to them, were thrown open. The education of the Jewish youth was a matter of great interest to this emperor, who promoted "philosophical morals." He accordingly decreed the establishment of Jewish primary and higher schools (Normal Schools), and made it compulsory for adults to learn the language of the country, inasmuch as in future only documents written in that language would possess legal force. He gently removed the risk of all possible attempts at compulsory conversion of the Jews. In the schools everything that might be offensive to any creed was to be omitted from the curriculum. An ordinance enjoined (2nd November) that the Jews were to be everywhere considered as "fellow-men," and all excesses against them were to be avoided. The Leibzoll (body-tax), which was more humiliating to the Christians than to the Jews, was also abolished by Joseph II. of glorious memory, in addition to the special law-taxes, the passport-duty, the night-duty, and all similar oppressive imposts which had stamped the Jews as outcasts, for they were now to

have equal rights with the Christian inhabitants (19th Dec.). Joseph II. did not intend to concede complete citizenship to the Jews; on the contrary, they were still forbidden to reside in those cities whence Christian intolerance had hitherto banished them. Even in Vienna Jews were allowed to dwell in only a few exceptional cases on payment of protection-money (toleration-tax), which protection did not extend to their grown-up sons. They were not suffered to have a single public synagogue in Vienna. But Joseph II. nevertheless annulled several vexatious, restrictive regulations, such as the compulsory wearing of beards, the prohibition against going out on the forenoon on Sundays and holidays, while the right was granted them to frequent public pleasure resorts. The emperor also permitted the Jewish wholesale merchants, the gentry and their sons, to wear swords (2nd Jan., 1782), and especially insisted that the Christians should behave in a friendly manner towards the Jews.

A considerable change was thus made. The ignominy of a thousand years, which the uncharitableness of the Church, the avarice of princes and the brutality of nations, had cast upon the race of Judah, was now partly removed at least in one country. Dohm's proposals in consequence met with earnest consideration; they were not regarded as ideal dreams, but as political principles worthy of practical attention. Scholars, clergymen, statesmen and princes began to interest themselves seriously in the Jewish question. Every thoughtful person, either within or beyond Germany, took one side or the other. Numerous opinions and ideas were aired; the most marvellous propositions were made. A preacher, named Schwager, wrote:

"I have always been very averse to hate an unfortunate nation, because they worship God in another way. I have always lamented that we have driven the Jews to deceive us by an oppressive political yoke. For what else could they do, in order to live? in what other way could they fight against their heavy taxes?"

Diez, the excellent friend of Dohm, one of the noblest men of that epoch, afterwards Prussian Ambassador to the Turkish Court, thought that Dohm had asked far too little for the Jews.

“You aver most truly,” he remarked, “that the present moral depravity of the Jews is a consequence of their bondage. But in order to give the true colour to the picture, and to weaken the reproaches levelled at the Jews, a representation of the moral depravity of the Christians would be much more useful ; certainly this is not less than that of the Jews, and more likely the cause of the latter.”

John von Müller, the talented historian of the Swiss, who, having a thorough knowledge of general history, also admired the glorious antiquity of the Jews, praised Dohm’s efforts on behalf of the Jews, and supplied him from the treasures of his intellect with new proofs how the mediæval Jews had been unjustly and pitilessly persecuted, and had been demoralised by intolerable tyranny. He wished that the writings of Maimuni, “who was the Luther of the Jews,” were translated into one of the European languages.

Naturally, hostile pamphlets were also not wanting. Especially noteworthy was an abusive tract, published in Prague, entitled “Upon the Inutility of the Jews in the Kingdoms of Bohemia and Moravia,” in which the author indulged in common insults against the Jews, and revived against them all the charges of poisoning wells, sedition, and other false imputations to bring about their expulsion. This scurrilous work was so violent, that the Emperor Joseph forbade its circulation (2nd March, 1782). A more bitter opponent of the Jews at this time was Frederick Traugott Hartman. And why? Because he had been cheated out of some coins by Jewish hawkers. On account of his venomous tone, however, his writings harmed the Jews less than those of the German scholastics, who cast a darker shadow over the Jews.

To these belonged a famous scientific authority



in Germany, John David Michaelis, the aged Professor at Göttingen. His range of vision had been widened by travels and observation of the world around, and he had cut himself adrift from the hollowness of Lutheran theology. Michaelis was the founder of the rationalist school of theologians, who resolved the miracles of the Holy Scriptures and their sublimity into simple natural facts. Through his "Mosaic Justice," and cultivation of Hebrew grammar and exegesis, he had gained high repute. But Michaelis had exactly that proportion of unbelief and belief which made him hate the Jews as the bearers of revealed religion and a miraculous history, and caused him to despise them as antagonists of Christianity. A Jew, an officer in the French army, when it was stationed in Göttingen, had scarcely thought that the slavish obeisances of the professors, which they held as due to every Frenchman, worthy of an answering salute. This was ground enough for Michaelis to abominate the Jews one and all, and to affirm of them that they were of despicable character. In the same way, Michaelis had already several years ago remarked, on the appearance of Lessing's drama "the Jew," "that a noble Jew was a poetic impossibility." Experience had already disproved this assertion through Mendelssohn and other persons; but a German professor cannot be mistaken. Michaelis adhered to his opinion that the Jews were an incorrigible race. Sometimes he condemned the Jews from a theological point of view, at others from political considerations. It is hard to say whether it is to be explained as a mark of insensibility, intellectual dulness, or wickedness, that Michaelis blurted out:

"It seems to me, that here in Germany, they (the Jews) already have everything that they could possibly desire, and I do not know what he (Dohm) wishes to add thereto. Medicine, philosophy, physics, mathematics they are not excluded from,—but they certainly ought not to receive high positions."

He even defended the taking of protection-money from the Jews.

It cannot be said that the anti-Jewish treatise of Michaelis injured them at the time, for in any case the German princes and people would never have emancipated them, had not the imperious progress of history compelled it. But in after years Michaelis was employed as an authority against the Jews. The agitation excited by Dohm, and the voices *pro* and *con.*, had only resulted in forming public opinion upon Judaism, and this showed its favourable effects not in Germany, but in France. Miraculous concatenation of historical events! The venomous Alsatian district judge had wished to have the Jews of Alsace annihilated, and through his malice he actually helped to facilitate the liberation of the Jews in France.

Mendelssohn prudently kept himself in the background during this movement: he did not desire to have attention drawn to him as a prejudiced defender of his brethren in religion and race. He blessed the outbreak of interest in his unhappy kinsmen.

“Blessed be Almighty Providence that has allowed me, at the end of my days, to live to this happy period, in which the rights of humanity begin to be conceived in their true sense.”

Meanwhile, two things stirred him to break silence. He found that the arrows hurled by Dohm had been insufficient to pierce the thick-skinned monster of Jew-hatred.

“Reason and humanity have raised their voices in vain, for grey-headed prejudice is deaf.”

Dohm himself did not appear to him to be free from the general prejudice, because he admitted that the Jews of the present day were depraved, useless, even harmful; therefore he offered means to improve them. But Mendelssohn, who knew his co-religionists better, could not find that they were

so greatly infected with moral leprosy—or that they differed so widely from Christians of the same class and trade—as the arrogant Christians in their self-glorification were wont to assert. In a very clever way Mendelssohn not alone caused the Göttingen scholars Michaelis and Hartmann, but also Dohm, to understand that they had misconceived the Jewish question.

“It is wonderful to note how prejudice assumes the forms of every century in order to act despotically towards us, and to place difficulties in the way of our obtaining civil rights. In every superstitious age there were sacred objects which we used to insult out of mere wantonness, crucifixes which we used to pierce and cause to bleed; children whom we secretly circumcised and stabbed in order to feast our eyes upon the sight; Christian blood, that we wanted for our festival of Passover; wells that we poisoned.

“Now times have changed, calumny no longer makes its desired impression. Now we are upbraided with superstition and ignorance, a lack of moral sentiments, taste and refined manners, incapacity for the arts, sciences, and useful industry, with uselessness for the service of war and the State, invincible inclination to cheating, usury, and lawlessness which have all taken the place of the more coarse indictments against us, to exclude us from the number of useful citizens, and to reject us from the motherly bosom of the State. You tie our hands, and then reproach us that we do not use them. . . . Meanwhile reason and the spirit of research of our century have not yet wiped away all traces of barbarism in history. Various legends of the present day have obtained credit, because it has not occurred to any one to cast doubts upon them. Several of these fables are supported by such important authorities that no one has the boldness to declare them to be legends and libels. Still at the present moment there are many cities of Germany where no circumcised person, even though he pays duty for his creed, is allowed to issue forth in open daylight without being watched from fear lest he kidnap a Christian child or poison the wells. During the night also, in spite of strict vigilance, he is not trusted, owing to his well-known intercourse with evil spirits.”

The second point in Dohm's memoir which did not please Mendelssohn was that, so far from calling for the recognition of the State for the Jewish religion, it demanded that the Government should grant them the right of excluding unruly members by pronouncing a sort of excommunication. This did not appear to harmonise with the conception of religion as he entertained it. In order to avoid the wrong path to which the well-



meant apology of Dohm threatened to lead, and at the same time direct the obstinate misapprehension of the Jews as much as possible into the right road, Mendelssohn caused one of his young friends, a physician, Marcus Herz, to translate from the English original the "Vindiciæ Judæorum" of Manasseh ben Israel against the numerous slanderous charges brought against them, to which he himself wrote a preface full of luminous, glowing thoughts (March, 1782), called "The Salvation of the Jews," as an appendix to Dohm's work. Manasseh's Apology was buried in a book that was little read; Mendelssohn therefore strove to render its excellent truths known among the cultured classes, and by a correct elucidation endowed them with fitting vigour. In this preface he strongly emphasized his conviction that the Church might well arrogate to itself the right of inflicting punishment upon its followers; but religion, the true faith that was based upon reason and love of humanity, "requires neither an arm nor a finger for its purpose; it merely concerns the spirit and the heart. Moreover it does not expel sinners and renegades from its doors." Mendelssohn detested resorting to interdict without even knowing the whole extent of the harm which it had occasioned in the course of Jewish history. He therefore adjured the Rabbis and ministers to give up their right of excommunicating.

"Alas! my brethren, you have felt the oppressive yoke of intolerance only too severely; all the nations of the earth seem hitherto to have been deluded by the imaginary idea that religion can only be maintained by an iron hand. You, perhaps, have suffered yourselves to be misled without thinking. Oh, my brethren, follow the example of love, as you have till now followed that of hatred!"

Mendelssohn now held such a high position in public opinion, that every new publication which bore his name was eagerly read. The main thought of the preface to the "Vindication" of Manasseh ben

Israel, that religion has no rights over its followers and must not resort to compulsory measures, struck its readers with astonishment. This had never occurred to any member of Christianity before. Enlightened Christian clergymen, such as Teller, Spalding, Zollikofer, and others gradually fell in with the new idea, and tendered their public approval of it to its creator. Bigoted clerics and obdurate minds, on the other hand, beheld therein the destruction of religion: "All this is new and difficult; the first principles are denied," said they. But in Jewish circles also many objections were made to Mendelssohn's view. It seemed as if he had suddenly discarded that Judaism which recognises an elaborate system of penalties for religious crimes and transgressions. Among the Christians it was asserted of him, in a pamphlet called "Inquiry into Light and Truth," that he had finally dropped his mask; he had embraced the religion of love, and turned his back upon his native faith, which execrates and punishes.

For the second time Mendelssohn was compelled to emerge from his retirement, and to speak out upon religion. This he did in a work entitled "Jerusalem," or "Upon Ecclesiastical Power and Judaism" (Spring, 1783), of which the purity of the contents and form is a memorial of his lofty genius. The gentle tone that breathes through this book, the warmth of conviction, the frankness of utterance, its child-like ingenuousness and yet profoundly thoughtful train of ideas, the graceful style which renders even dry discussion enjoyable—all these qualities earned a high appreciation for this work in the eyes of its contemporaries, and will always assure it a place in literature. At the time it excited great surprise. It had been believed, in consequence of his ideas upon Judaism, that Mendelssohn, if he had not entirely broken away, had yet declared many things to be worthless,

whilst on the contrary he now showed that he was in fact an ardent Jew, and would not yield a tittle of existing Judaism, either Rabbinical or Biblical; in fact, that he claimed the highest privileges for it. All this was in accord with his peculiar method of thought.

Judaism recognises the inner freedom of religious convictions. Original, pure Judaism therefore contains no binding articles of belief, no symbolical books, to which the faithful were compelled to swear and affirm their incumbent duty. Judaism does not prescribe Faith, but Knowledge and Recognition; and it insists that its doctrines be taken to heart. Within this despised sphere of religion everyone may think, suggest, and err just as he pleases without incurring the guilt of heresy. Its right of inflicting punishment begins only when evil minds wilfully transgress a law. Why? Because Judaism is not a revealed religion, but a revealed legislation. Its first precept is not, "thou shalt believe or not believe," but, "thou shalt do or abstain from doing."

"In the Divinely-ordained arrangement, the State and Religion are one. Not unbelief, nor false teaching and error, but wicked offences against the principles of the State and the national constitution are chastised. With the destruction of the Temple, *i.e.*, with the downfall of the State, all corporal and capital punishment, as well as money fines, have ceased. The national bonds of the people were dissolved; religious trespasses were no longer crimes against the State, and religion, as such, knows no punishment."

For those persons who seriously or jestingly had reported that Mendelssohn had separated from Judaism, he almost superfluously laid stress upon two points which did not exactly belong to his subject, *viz.*, that the so-called ceremonial law of Judaism is likewise or particularly of Divine origin, and that its obligatory character must continue "until it pleases the Supreme to abrogate it as plainly and publicly as it was revealed."

The effect of this detailed apology was greater



than even Mendelssohn had expected. Instead of defending himself he had come forward as an accuser, and in an equally tender and forcible manner had laid bare the hateful ulcers of the Church and of State constitution. Two of the most authoritative representatives of the spirit of the age pronounced opinions upon him and the subject which he was discussing, which are indeed flattering. Kant, who had already testified to his greatness of thought, wrote to him that he had read "Jerusalem" with admiration for its keenness of argument, its refinement and cleverness of composition.

"I consider this book as the herald of a great reform, which will affect not alone your nation, but also others. You have succeeded in combining your religion with such a degree of freedom of conscience as was never imagined possible, and of which no other faith can boast. You have, at the same time, so thoroughly and so clearly demonstrated the necessity of unlimited liberty of conscience in every religion, that ultimately our Church will also be led to reflect how it should remove from its midst everything that disturbs and oppresses conscience, which will finally unite all men in their view of the essential points of religion."

Michaelis, the rationalistic anti-Semite, stood baffled, embarrassed and ashamed before the bold ideas of the "Jerusalem." Judaism, which he had scornfully disdained, now fearlessly and victoriously raised its head. The Jew, Mendelssohn, whom he had not thought a very brilliant person, appeared as the incarnation of conscientiousness and wisdom. Michaelis was sorely perplexed in passing judgment upon this remarkable work. He was obliged to admit many things. Thus without any selfish motives and only impelled by circumstances, Mendelssohn had glorified Judaism and shaken off disgrace from his people. In the meantime Dohm was aiding him. He continued to expound Judaism in the most favourable light, and to refute all the open and odious attacks upon it; for his part he regarded the quarrel as his own.

But Dohm effected more through his writings in favour of Jews by enlisting the sympathies of Mirabeau, a man with shoulders strong enough to bear a new system of the world, on their behalf, and who continued the work of Dohm.

At the same time, and in the same way, Mendelssohn again aroused the internal rejuvenescence of the Jews, which was to be accompanied by their external emancipation; and this also in an indirect way. Either from modesty or discretion, he would not willingly come to the front, but stimulated Dohm to do battle, and also brought forward another friend, who appeared born for this task. Owing to Mendelssohn, Wessely became a historical personage, who worked with all the energy of his strength for the inner improvement of the Jews, completing the deficiency of Mendelssohn's retiring character. Hartwig (Hartog, Naphtali-Herz) Wessely (born in Hamburg, 1725; died in same town, 1805) was of a peculiar disposition, combining elements not often associated together. His grandfather had established a manufactory for arms in Holstein, and had been a commercial councillor and royal resident. His father also conducted an important business, and had frequent intercourse with the so-called great people. In this way Hartwig Wessely came with his father to Copenhagen, where a Portuguese congregation, and also a few German Jews had already settled. His early education was the same as that of most boys of that time; he learnt to read Hebrew mechanically, and to translate the Bible in a wrong sense, in order to be launched, when nine years old, into the labyrinth of the Talmud. Meanwhile, a travelling grammarian, Solomon Hanau, promoted the development of the germs that lay within him and inspired him with a love for the Hebrew language. His labour was not in vain. The seed sown by Hanau was to bear a

thousand-fold fruit. The chief interest of Wessely was the study of Holy Writings in the original tongue; it was the aim of his life to understand them from all points of view. Owing to the numerous dealings of his father with non-Jewish circles, in the course of his business, Wessely obtained an insight into actual life, and also learned other branches of knowledge, new languages, geography, history, descriptions of travels. These, however, only served as auxiliary sciences to be employed in his special study of the Scriptures, and by their means he was enabled to penetrate deeper into their thought and spirit. Like Mendelssohn, Wessely was self-taught. Very early he developed a delight for beauty, taste and sentiment, a purity of speech and form, and a repugnance to the mixed dialects and jargon commonly used among the German Jews.

Wessely again resembled Mendelssohn, because he trained himself to be a moral character with strict conscientiousness and elevated feelings of honour. Thoughts, sentiments, words and deeds, also closely resembled Mendelssohn's. He was of deep and pure piety, and an unswerving adherent to Judaism. His nature, however, did not display the gentle pliancy of Mendelssohn's. He was stiffer and more pedantic, more inclined to juggle with words and to split hairs than to think deeply, and he had no correct idea of the action and business of the work-a-day world. All his life Wessely remained a visionary, and gazed at the events of the real world through coloured glasses. It is possible that in one way Wessely was superior to Mendelssohn; he was a poet, or to speak accurately he possessed an uncommon facility and aptitude for making beautiful, well-sounding verses of blameless refinement, of graceful symmetrical smoothness and accurate construction.

Wessely was greatly charmed by the laws of the Emperor Joseph in favour of the Jews, and especially



by the command that they should erect schools; he beheld therein the dawn of a golden age for the Jews, whilst Mendelssohn, with his keen perception, did not from the first expect great results. He remarks, "It is perhaps only a transient, passing idea, without any substance, or, as some fear, it originates in motives of interest." Wessely, however, trumpeted forth his thoughts, and composed a glowing hymn of praise to the noble rule and the magnanimity of the Emperor Joseph. As soon as he was informed that the rigidly orthodox party in Vienna regretted the order to establish schools as though it were a matter contrary to their conscience, he addressed a Hebrew letter (March, 1782), called "Words of Peace and Truth," to the Austrian congregations, exhorting them to welcome the benefit to be conferred upon them, to rejoice, and utilise it. He explained that it was a religious duty of the Jews, as commanded by the Talmud, to acquaint themselves with general culture, that this study must even precede a knowledge of religion, and that it was only by such means that they could remove the stains of disgrace which, owing to their ignorance, had weighed upon them for so long a time. Wessely especially emphasized the necessity of banishing the barbarous jargon from the midst of the Jews, and of cultivating a taste for a pure and euphonic language. He sketched a plan of instruction in his letter, showing how the Jewish youth should be led, step by step, from elementary subjects to the study of the Talmud. This letter, which was written with much fervour, impressive eloquence, and in a beautiful Hebrew style, could not have failed to produce a great effect, had not Wessely, in his fantastic manner commanded that all Jewish youths, without distinction of talents and future profession, should be educated, not only in a knowledge of history and geography, but also in natural sciences, astronomy, and philosophical religion, because only

by these preliminary branches of knowledge could a thorough understanding of the Holy Writ, and of Judaism, be acquired!

This epistle bore both sweet and bitter fruits for him. The community of Trieste, chiefly comprising Italian and Portuguese Jews, who, unlike the Germans, did not consider culture as heresy, had applied to the governor, Count Zinzendorf, declaring their readiness to establish a Normal School, and begging him to advise them how they might procure school books for religious instruction and ethics. Zinzendorf directed them to Mendelssohn, whose celebrated name had penetrated to that distant place. Accordingly, Joseph Chayim Galaïgo, in the name of the congregation of Trieste, despatched a petition to the Jewish scholar of Berlin that he should send his writings. On this occasion, Mendelssohn called the attention of the people of Trieste to his friend Wessely and to his circular letter, which recommended the founding of Jewish schools, and the community attached themselves to him forthwith. Thus his words, written with so much warmth, met with early encouragement.

From the strictly pious people, however, a storm now broke out against him. They were particularly indignant at his hearty approval of the reforms of the Emperor Joseph. The unamiable manner in which princes were wont to concede freedom, the force brought to bear upon the Jews, a natural aversion to forsake the past, the combined fear that through school education and partial emancipation young men would be seduced from Judaism, and that the instruction given at the Normal Schools would supersede the study of the Talmud—all these things had induced the Rabbis and representatives of tradition to oppose the reforming Jewish ordinances of the Emperor Joseph. Besides, there were men of doubtful piety, such as Herz Homberg, who eagerly pressed for-

ward to obtain appointments at the newly-founded training schools, and to lead the youthful students to innovations. Here and there were also intelligent men, especially in Prague, who greeted the new laws as salutary injunctions, and hoped by these means that the Jews would free themselves from their demoralised, wretched condition. But the minority were denounced by the orthodox as innovators and triflers. The religious simplicity which at every puff of wind feared the downfall of the edifice of faith, and the desire of gain which fattened upon ignorance and the perverse method of instruction in a corrupt dialect, worked hand in hand to predispose the communities against school reforms. Wessely destroyed the whole opposition with one blow. He who had hitherto been respected as an orthodox believer now supported the new order of things. Further, in his incautious way, he had quoted the Talmudical sentence, "A Talmudist, who does not possess knowledge (general culture) is much worse than a carcass." This expression greatly angered the orthodox. The Austrian Rabbis dared not attack Wessely openly, because he had only followed the emperor in his ideas. They appear therefore to have incited certain Polish Rabbis against him to condemn his circular letter, and to excommunicate him.

Although the zealots were without support from Berlin, they continued in their heretic-hunting, causing the pulpits to re-echo with imprecations against Wessely; and in Lissa his letter was publicly burnt. He had the bitter experience of standing alone in this conflict. None of his adherents publicly sided with him, although he was contending for a just cause by noble methods and in the most becoming manner. Mendelssohn did not like such disputes, and at this time was suffering too much, bodily and mentally, to take part



in them. Thus Wessely had to conduct his own defence. He then published a second letter (24th April), supposed to be addressed to the Trieste congregation, in which he again dwelt upon the importance of regular instruction, and the abolition of old practices, and disproved the charges brought against him. Gentle and forbearing as he was, he avoided retorting severely upon his opponents; but accidentally he gave utterance to reprehensible remarks against orthodoxy and against the one-sided, perverse Talmudic tendency. This was, indeed, the irony of an historical system, that the most orthodox among the followers of Mendelssohn, without deserving it, gave battle to Rabbinism, just as the Kabbalist Jacob Emden gave the first violent blow to the Kabbala. Gradually, several Italian Rabbis of Trieste, Ferrara, and Venice, spoke in favour of Wessely, and recommended culture, although they were unable to bridge over the chasm that had been formed between it and Rabbinism. Wessely was victorious; and the opposing Rabbis laid down their arms. Schools for regular instruction arose here and there, even in Prague. But the strict Talmudists were still in the right. Their suspicions foreboded the future more thoroughly than had Mendelssohn and Wessely, with all their confidence that the old rigid form of Judaism could no more assert itself. Both these men, who had felt so much at ease in the old structure, and wished only to see it cleansed here and there from cobwebs and the fungus with which it was overgrown, contributed to sap its foundations.

Wessely, ever deserted by fortune, beheld this decay with weeping eyes. Mendelssohn, more fortunate, however, was spared this pain. Death called him away in time, before he was able to perceive that his own circle, even his own daughters, treated with contemptuous scorn and rejected what his

heart held to be most sacred, and what he so earnestly strove to glorify. Had he lived ten years longer, even his wisdom would perhaps not have availed him to tide over this anguish. He who possessed no trace of romance had led an ideal life, and died, according to all ideals, at the right moment. The friendship and philosophy which had elevated his life and brought him fame, to some extent broke his heart. When Mendelssohn had set himself the task of raising a memorial to his forgotten friend, and to show him in his true greatness to future generations, he learned from Jacobi that shortly before his death Lessing had manifested a decided liking for the Spinozan philosophy. "Lessing a Spinozist!" This pierced Mendelssohn's heart as with a spear. Nothing was so distasteful to him as the pantheistic system of Spinoza, which denied a personal God, Providence, and Immortality, ideas with which Mendelssohn's soul was intimately bound up. That Lessing should have entertained such convictions, and that he, his bosom friend, should know nothing whatsoever about them! Jealousy was aroused in Mendelssohn, that Lessing had communicated to others the secrets of his mind so carefully concealed from himself, and a deep disappointment that his friend had not permitted him to share in his convictions. He suspected that his philosophy, if Lessing had been displeased with it, would have become obsolete and thrust aside. His whole being rose in resistance against such doubts. These thoughts robbed the last years of his life of rest, made him passionate, excited, feverish. After composing his last work to refute Jacobi's "To the friends of Lessing," the excitement so overpowered him that it brought about his death (Jan. 4th, 1786). This ideal death for friendship and wisdom worthily concluded his life, and showed him to posterity as he appeared to his numerous friends and admirers, an upright and honest man, in whom there was neither

falsehood nor guile. Almost the entire population of the Prussian capital, and many earnest men both within and beyond Germany, mourned the man who forty years before, with heavy heart had knocked at one of the gates of Berlin, anxiously waiting to see whether the Christian or Jewish beadle would drive him away. The attempt of his Christian friends, Nicolai, Biester and Engel (the tutors of the Crown Prince, Frederick William III.), in conjunction with Jewish admirers, to erect a statue to Mendelssohn in the Opera Square next to those of Liebnitz, Lambert, and Sulzer, although it did not meet with general approval, yet characterises the progress of the time. The deformed son of the so-called "Ten Commandments writer" of Dessau had become an ornament of the city of Berlin.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE NEW CHASSIDISM.

The Alliance of Reason with Mysticism—Israel Baalshem, his Career and Reputation—Movement against Rabbinism—The “Zaddik” —Beer Mizricz, his Arrogance and Deceptions—The Devotional Methods of the Chassidim—Their Liturgy—Dissolution of the Synods “of the Four Lands”—Cossack Massacres in Poland—Elijah Wilna, his Character and Method of Research—The Mizricz and Karlin Chassidim—Circumstances prove favourable to the Spread of the New Sect—Vigorous Proceedings against them in Wilna—Death of Beer Mizricz—His Successors—The “Kozenezer” Maggid—Senior Solomon of Liadi—Progress of Chassidism despite the Persecution of its Opponents.

1750—1786 C.E.

As soon as an historical work has performed its service and has to undergo a change, new phenomena arise from various sides, and assume a hostile attitude which either alter or destroy it. It could be foreseen that the rejuvenescence of the Jewish race, for which Mendelssohn had rendered the way smooth, would produce a transformation and decomposition of religious habits among the Jews. The innovators had desired, hoped, and striven for this; the old orthodox party had suspected and dreaded it. The process of dissolution was, however, brought about in another way, upon another scene, under entirely different conditions and by other means, and this could not be foreseen. There arose in Poland a new Essenism, with forms similar to those of the ancient cult, with ablutions and baths, white garments, miraculous sanctification and prophetic visions. As of old, this movement originated with ultra-pious people, but soon turned against its own parent, and perhaps hid within itself germs of a special

kind, which being in course of development cannot well be defined. It seems remarkable that, at the same time as Mendelssohn declared rational thought to be the essence of Judaism, and in fact founded a widely-extended order of enlightened men, another banner was unfurled, the adherents of which announced the grossest superstition to be the fundamental principle of Judaism, and formed a special order of wonder-seeking confederates. Both these new conformations took up a hostile position with relation to existing traditional Judaism, and created a rupture. History in its generative power is as manifold and puzzling as Nature. It produces in close proximity healing herbs and poisonous plants, lovely flowers and hideous parasites. Reason and unreason seemed to have entered into a covenant to shatter to atoms the gigantic structure of Talmudic Judaism. The combination that history had once before witnessed in the contemporaneous existence of Spinoza and Sabbataï Zevi, which caused Judaism to tremble, was now repeated by the simultaneous array against it of representatives of reason and unreason. Enlightenment and Kabbalistic mysticism joined hands in order to commence the work of destruction, Mendelssohn and Israel Baalshem, what contrasts! And yet both unconsciously undermined the basis of Talmudic Judaism. The origin of the New Chassidim, who had already become numerous, and who sprang up very rapidly, is not so clear as the movement started by Mendelssohn. The new sect, a daughter of darkness, was born in gloom, and even to-day proceeds stealthily on its mysterious way. Only a few circumstances which contributed towards its rise and propagation are known.

The founders of the new Chassidism were Israel of Miedziboz (born about 1698; died 1759) and Beer of Mizricz (born about 1700; died 1772). The

former received alike from his admirers and antagonists the surname of "The Wonderworker by means of invocations of the Name of God," Baalshem, or Baal-Shemtob, and in the customary abbreviated form, Besht. As ugly as the very name, Besht, was the form of the founder and the order that he called into existence. The Graces did not sit by his cradle, but the Spirit of Belief in Wonder-working, and his brain was so filled with fantastic images that he could not distinguish them from real, tangible beings. The experiences of Israel's youth are unknown. This much however is certain, that he was left an orphan, poor and neglected, early in life, and that he passed a great portion of his youth in the forests and caves of the Carpathian mountains. The spurs of the Carpathian hills were his teachers. Here he learnt what he would not have acquired in the dark, narrow, dirty hovels called schools in Poland—namely, to understand the tongue in which Nature speaks. The spirits of the mountains and the fountains whispered secrets to him. Here he also learned, probably from the peasant women who gathered herbs on the mountaintops and on the edges of rivers, the use of plants for remedies. But as the people did not trust to the healing power of Nature, but added thereto conjurations and invocations to good and evil spirits, Israel also accustomed himself to this method of cure. He became a miracle-doctor. Necessity, too, was his teacher; it taught him to pray. How often in his forsaken and orphaned condition may he have suffered from want even of dry bread, how often may he have been surrounded by real or imaginary dangers! In his distress he prayed in the usual form of the synagogue; but he spoke his words with fervour and intense devotion, or cried them aloud in the solitude of the mountains. His audible prayer awakened the echoes of the mountains, which appeared as an answer to his supplications. He



seems to have been often in a state of rapture, and to have induced this condition in his prayers by frantic movements of the whole body. This agitation drove the blood to his head, made his eyes glitter, and wrought both body and soul into such a condition of over-excitement that he felt a deadly weakness coming over him. Was this magnetic tension of the soul caused by the motions and the shouting, singing and praying?

Israel Baalshem asserted that, in consequence of these bodily agitations and this intense devotion, he could pierce into infinity. His soul soared into the world of light, heard and saw the Divine secrets and revelations, entered into conversation with sublime spirits, and could by their intervention secure the grace of God and prosperity, and more especially avert impending calamities. Israel Miedziboz also boasted that he could see into the future, as secrets were unveiled to him. Was this a deliberate boast, or self-deception, or merely an over-estimation of morbid phenomena of the soul? There are persons, times and places, in which no line of demarcation can be drawn between trickery and self-delusion. In Poland, in Baalshem's time, when the terrible mental strain created by the Kabbala in connection with the Sabbatian fraud, was combined with a feverish expectation of an imminent Messianic redemption, everything was possible and everything was credible. In that land the fancy of both Jews and Christians moved among the extraordinary and supernatural, as in its natural element. Israel steadfastly and firmly believed in the visions caused by excitement of soul and body; he believed in the power of his prayers. In his dream he went too far, and blasphemously declared that prayer is a kind of marriage union (Zivug) of man with the Godhead (Shechina), and upon which he must enter whilst in a state of excitement. Equipped with

a pretended higher knowledge of secret remedies and the spirit world, to which he thought he had attained through Divine grace, Israel entered the society of men in order to prove his higher gifts. It must be acknowledged to his credit that he never misused these talents. He did not make a trade of them nor seek to earn his livelihood from them. At first he followed the humble occupation of a coachman, afterwards dealt in horses, and growing richer he kept a tavern.

Occasionally, when specially requested, he employed his miraculous cures, and thereby gained so great a reputation that he was even consulted by Polish nobles. He became a conspicuous person owing to his noisy, delirious praying, which must have so transfigured him that men could not recognise in him the coachman or the horse-dealer whom they knew. He was admired for his revelation of the secrets of hidden things. In Poland not only the unlearned and the Jews considered such gifts and miracles possible; the Jesuits and the Kabbalists had stultified both the Christians and Jews of their country, and had plunged them into a state of primitive stupidity.

It would have been a remarkable thing if such a wonder-doctor, who appeared to have intercourse with the spirit world, should not have found adherents, but he can hardly have designed the formation of a new sect. He was joined by persons of a similar disposition to his own, who felt a religious impulse, and who desired to satisfy it without leading a rigorous, penitential life, or by a mechanical repetition of prescribed prayers. They attached themselves to Israel, in Miedziboz, in order to be able to offer their devotional exercises with fervour, in a sing-song tune, clapping their hands, bowing, jumping, gesticulating, and uttering cries. Almost at the same time there arose, in Wales, a Christian sect called "the Jumpers," who resorted

to similar movements during prayer, and induced trances and mesmeric dreams. At the same time there was also established, in North America, the sect of the Shakers, by an Irish girl, Johanna Lee, who likewise whilst in delirium during prayer, pursued mystic Messianic phantoms. Israel need not have been a trickster in order to obtain followers. Mysticism and madness were contagious. He also attracted men who desired to lead a free and merry life, and still hoped to be able to carry out a lofty aim, and to live in an assured state of serenity and carelessness by being near to God, and who desired to advance the Messianic future; they did not require to pore over Talmudical folios in order to share in the higher piety.

It now became the fashion among neo-Chassidean circles to scoff at the Talmudists. These also mocked at the unlearned chief of the new order, who had a following without belonging to any society or guild, without having been initiated into the Talmud and its appendages, for the Chassidim depreciated the value of the study of the Talmud, inasmuch as it did not promote a truly godly life. Open war was now declared between the neo-Chassidim and the Rabbanites; the latter could not, however, prevail against their opponents as long as Israel's adherents remained firm in their observance of existing Judaism. The feud, through Beer of Mizricz, grew after the death of the original founder to a complete rupture, and barbarous superstition and degeneracy increased.

Dob Beer (or Berish) was no visionary like Israel, but possessed a faculty of clear insight into the condition of men's minds. He was thus able to render the mind and will of others subservient to him. Although he only joined the new movement shortly before Israel's death, yet, whether at his suggestion or not, Israel's son and sons-in-law were passed over, and Beer obtained the nomination as Israel's



successor in the leadership of the neo-Chassidean community. Beer, who transferred the centre to Mizricz—a village in Volhynia—was superior to his master in several points. He was well read in Talmudical and Kabbalistic writings, was a skilful preacher (Maggid), who could make the most far-fetched Biblical verses, as also Agadic and Zoharic expressions, harmonise with his aim, and thus he was able to surprise his audience. He removed from the Chassidim the stigma of ignorance which was especially disgraceful in Poland, and secured a larger accession of supporters. He had a commanding appearance, did not mingle with the people, but lived the whole week secluded in a small room—only accessible to his confidants—and thus acquired the renown of a mysterious intercourse with the heavenly world. Only on the Sabbath did he show himself to the sight of all who desired to become worthy of beholding him. On this day he appeared splendidly attired in white satin, the colour signifying grace in the Kabbalistic language, with outer garment, shoes, and even a snuff-box of this hue. On this day he received his friends—strangers who had made a pilgrimage to meet him—the new members and those who were curious to see the Kabbalistic saint and wonder-worker, and who desired to offer up their prayers together with him, in the way introduced by Israel Besht. In order to produce the state of mind necessary to devout prayer, Beer indulged in vulgar jokes, whereby the bystanders were raised to a pleasant frame of mind; for instance, he would joke with one of the circle and throw him down. In the midst of this child's play he would suddenly cry out, "Now serve the Lord with gladness."

Under Beer's guidance, the constitution of Chassidism remained apparently in the same form as under his predecessor; fervent, convulsive praying, inspiration (Hithlahabut), miraculous cures, and

revelations of the future. But as these faculties did not come, as with Israel, from his own peculiar state of mind or madness, but could only be imitated—artifice or illusion had to supply what Nature withheld. The Chassidean leader, or Zaddik, the perfectly pious man, had sometimes to be inspired in prayer, to have ecstatic dreams and visions. But how could a clever plotter appear to be inspired? Alcohol, which was so much liked in Poland, now had to take the place of the inner inspiring spirit. Beer had not acquired the knowledge of remedial herbs, which his teacher had obtained in the Carpathian mountains. He, therefore, devoted himself to studying medicine, and if his methods did not avail, then the sick person would die—in his sinfulness. To predict the future was a more difficult task, and yet this must be overcome; his reputation as a thaumaturgist depended upon it. Beer then took counsel. Among his intimate accomplices were certain expert spies, worthy of serving in the secret police. These men discovered many things which were hidden by the veil of secrecy, and told them to their leader; thus he was enabled to assume an appearance of omniscience. Or his emissaries would commit robberies; the people concerned would come to the “Saint” in his hermitage to find them out; and he was able to indicate the exact spot where the missing articles were lying. Strangers, attracted by the report of his fame, when in his neighbourhood, were admitted, as mentioned, on the following Saturday to take part in the Chassidean witches’ Sabbath. In the meantime his spies, by means of artful questions and other inquiries, gleaned a knowledge of the affairs and secret desires of these strangers, and communicated them to the Zaddik. In the first interview Beer, in a seemingly casual manner, was able, in a skilfully arranged discourse to bring in some words relating

to these uninitiated persons, whereby the latter would be convinced that he had looked into their hearts and knew their past. By these and similar contrivances, he succeeded in asserting himself as omniscient, and in increasing the number of his followers. Every new convert testified to his Divine inspiration, and induced others to join.

In order to strengthen the respect shown for him, Beer propounded a theory, which in its logical application, was destined to promote the worst and most harmful consequences. Supported by the Kabbalistic formula, that "the righteous or the pious man is the foundation of the world," he distorted this idea to refer to the Zaddik, or the Chasidean chief, to such an extent that he uttered blasphemy against God. "Such a man is not alone the most perfect and sinless human being, he is not alone Moses, but the representative of God and His image." All and everything that the Zaddik does, urges and thinks has a decided influence upon the upper and lower worlds. The Deity especially reveals himself in the acts and movements of the Zaddik, and even his most trifling deeds are to be considered important. The way he wears his clothes, ties his shoes, smokes his pipe, whether he delivers profound addresses or indulges in silly jokes—everything bears a close relation to the Deity, and is of as much moment as the fulfilment of a religious duty. Even if he is inhaling inspiration from the bottle, he is therewith swaying the upper and nether worlds. All these absurd fancies owed their origin to the superstitious doctrines of the Kabbala, which, in spite of the unspeakable confusion they had wrought through Sabbatai Zevi and Frank, in spite of the opposition which their chief exponent, the Zohar, had encountered about this time at the hands of Jacob Emden, still clouded the brains of the Polish Jews. According to this theory, the Zaddik, *i.e.*, Berish Mizricz, was



the embodiment of power and splendour upon the earth. In his "Stübel," or "Hermitage," *i.e.*, in his dirty little retired chamber, he considered himself as great as the Papal Vicar of God upon earth in his magnificent palace. The Zaddik also bore himself proudly towards men; all this was "for the glory of God"—as though he had sought to establish a sort of Catholicism among the Jews.

Beer's idea, however, was not meant to remain idle and unfruitful, but to bring him honour and revenue. As the Zaddik cared for the condition of the world, for the obtaining of heavenly grace, and especially for Israel's preservation and glorification, his adherents had to cultivate three kinds of virtues. It was their duty to draw nigh to him, to enjoy his glances, and from time to time to make pilgrimages to him. Further, they had to confess their sins to him. By these means alone, could they hope for pardon of their iniquities. Finally, they had to bring him presents, rich gifts, which he knew how to employ to the best advantage. It was also incumbent upon them to attend to his personal wants. It seems as if a return had been made to the days of the priests of Baal, so vulgar and disgusting do these perversities appear. The saddest part of all is that this teaching, worthy of a people that worshipped a fetish, met with approbation in Poland; even in the country distinguished by its deep acquaintance with Jewish literature. But it was just this excess and repletion of the spiritual digestive apparatus that produced such lamentable phenomena. The organ of intellect among the Polish Jews had been so over-excited, that the coarsest things were more pleasing to them than what was refined.

Beer despatched abroad as his apostles bombastic preachers who spread his doctrines. They seasoned their debased teachings with threats from the

Scriptures. Common vagabonds and idlers, of whom there were so many in Poland, attached themselves to the new Chassidim, some from inclination to enthusiasm and belief in miracles; others, the more cunning, in order to procure money in an easy way, and to lead a pleasant existence; and idlers, because in the court maintained by the Zaddik, they found occupation and gratified their curiosity. If such idlers were asked what they were thinking of, as they strolled about with pipe in mouth, they would reply with all seriousness, "We are meditating upon God." The simple people, however, who hoped to win bliss through the Chassidean discipline, engaged continually in prayer, until through exhaustion, they fell powerless to the ground.

Neo-Chassidism was favoured by two circumstances, the fraternisation of the members and the dryness and fossilised character of Talmudic study as it had been carried on in Poland for more than a century. At the outset the Chassidim formed a kind of brotherhood, who did not indeed have a common purse, as formerly among their prototypes, the Essenes and the Judeo-Christians, but still had regard for the wants of needy members. Owing to the bonds that united them, their spying system, and commercial activity, it was easy for them to provide for those who lacked employment or food. On New Year and the Day of Atonement people who dwelt at long distances also undertook pilgrimages to the Zaddik, as formerly to the Temple, and left their wives and children in order to pass the so-called sacred occasions in company with their chief, and to be edified by his presence and actions. Here the Chassidean disciples learned to know one another, discussed local affairs and even gave mutual help. Well-to-do merchants also found an opportunity at these assemblies to converse with acquaint-

ances upon whose fidelity and brotherly attachment they could rely, to discover fresh means of gain. Fathers of marriageable daughters or even of younger girls sought and easily found husbands for them, which at that time in Poland was considered a highly important matter. The meals taken in common upon the afternoons of Saturdays and the holidays strengthened the bonds of loyalty and affection among them. Whence could these meals for so many guests be provided? The wealthy Chassidim regarded it as a conscientious duty to support the Zaddik liberally. A special source of income was obtained from the superstitious belief prevalent among the Chassidim that the Zaddik could, on payment of certain sums (Pidion, Redemption-money), ward off threatening perils and cure deadly diseases. Pressure was brought to bear upon wealthy but weak-minded persons, and they were terrified into believing that they could only escape impending calamities by rich gifts. Whoever desired to enter upon a hazardous transaction consulted the Zaddik as an oracle upon the issue of the matter, and had to pay for his counsel. The cunning Chassidim knew everything, had advice for everything, and by their craftiness were able to afford real assistance. The Zaddik had to assist the poor and the distressed with his revenues; he could not be miserly. Thus in time of need every member received help. Full of enthusiasm they returned home from their journey; the feeling that they belonged to a band of brothers elevated them, and they ardently looked forward to the return of the holy time. The poor and forsaken, fanatics and unprincipled, could not do better than join this brotherly union, this easy-going yet religious order.

Earnest men, also, felt themselves attracted to the Chassidim as a means of satisfying their spiritual wants. Rabbinical Judaism, as known



in Poland, offered no sort of religious comfort. Its representatives placed the highest value upon the dialectic, artificial exposition of the Talmud and its commentaries. Actual necessity had also caused that portion of the Talmud which treated of civil law to be closely studied, as the Rabbis exercised civil jurisdiction over their flock. Meditations upon decisions of new, complicated legal points, occupied the doctors of the Talmud day and night. Moreover, this hair-splitting was considered as the sublimest piety, and superseded everything else. If any one solved a really intricate theme in the Talmud, or discovered something new called a Torah, he felt content with himself, and was assured of his felicity hereafter. All other objects, the necessity of devotion, prayer, political activity, interest in the moral condition of the community, were secondary matters, to which scarcely any attention was paid. The study of logical formularies from the Talmud, or more correctly the laws of Mine and Thine, surpassed all other intellectual pursuits in Poland. The precepts of religion had degenerated, both amongst Talmudists and the unlearned into meaningless usages, and prayer into mere lip-service. To thinking men this aridity of Talmudic study, together with the love of debate, and the dogmatism and pride of the Rabbis arising from it, were repellent, and they flung themselves into the arms of the new order, which allowed so much play for the fancy and the emotions. Especially the class of preachers, those semi-Talmudists who were looked upon by erudite Talmudical Rabbis as inferior and contemptible, and were treated accordingly, men who eked out a wretched living or who almost starved, leagued themselves with the neo-Chassidim, because among them their talents of preaching might be appreciated, and they might obtain an honourable position and be secured against adversity. By the accession of such elements the

circle of neo-Chassidim became daily augmented. Almost in every town there lived followers of the new school, who occasionally paid visits to their brother-members and to their chief.

With their advancing strength the antipathy of the neo-Chassidim to the Rabbis and Talmudists continually increased. Before they were aware of it they already formed a new sect, who shunned intercourse with the Talmudic Jews. With Beer at their head, they felt themselves strong enough to introduce innovations, which, as was presaged, would bring down the anger of the Rabbis against them. Since prayer and the rites of Divine service connected with it were the chief object, they did not trouble themselves about prescriptions of the ritual law as to what prayers should be said, nor at what time the different services should commence and terminate, but pleased themselves in the matter. Through their daily ablutions, baths, and other preparations for public worship they were seldom ready for prayer at the prescribed time, but began later, prolonged it by the movements of their bodies and their intoning, and suddenly came to an end after omitting several portions. They were especially averse to the harsh interpolations in the Sabbath and festival prayers (the Piyutim). These insertions interrupted the most important and finest portions of the service, and destroyed the essence of prayer. In order to abolish these at a blow, Beer Mizricz introduced the prayer-book of the chief Kabbalist, Isaac Lurya, which for the greater part conforms to the Portuguese ritual, and does not contain poetical (poetanic) additions. In the eyes of the ultra-orthodox this innovation was an enormous crime, or rather a double offence, permitting, as it did, the omission of interpolations that had been hallowed by custom, and the alteration of the German ritual into the Sephardic.

This innovation would probably have been

severely punished upon the neo-Chassidim, but that at this time, when the political power of Poland lay crushed, the firm political connection of the Polish Jews had also been dissolved. Poland was distracted by civil war. "In this country," as the Primate of Gnesen complained at the opening of the Reichstag, March, 1764, "freedom is oppressed, the laws are not obeyed, justice cannot be obtained, trade is utterly ruined, districts and villages are devastated, the treasury is empty, and coins have no value;" it had been enfeebled by the Jesuits, and was already regarded by Russia as a sure prey. Its king was a weakling—Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski—the plaything of internal factions and external foes (Sept., 1764). In the first year of his reign, Poniatowski, among other laws issued a regulation which destroyed the communal union of the Polish Jews. The synod of the Four Provinces, which was composed of delegates from the Rabbis and the laity (Parnassim), and had authority to pronounce interdicts and to levy fines, was not permitted to assemble, to pass resolutions, nor execute them.

The dissolution of the synod was very fortunate for the neo-Chassidim. They could not now be excommunicated by the representatives of the combined Polish Jewish world, but each individual congregation had to proceed against them and forbid their meetings. But even this step was not taken, as the terrible death-struggle in which Poland engaged before its first mutilation, was severely felt by the wealthy Jews, who had great difficulty to preserve their own lives. The Confederation War broke out, which made many districts a desert; Poland, receiving measure for measure, was punished by eternal Justice in the same way as it had sinned. In the name of the Pope and the Jesuits it had always persecuted Dissenters, and excluded them from public offices,



and, in the name of the Dissenters, Catherine plunged the land into fratricidal war. The Russians, for the second time, let loose the Zaporoger Cossacks—the savage Haidamaks—against Poland, who, in many different methods, slaughtered Polish nobles, the clergy and the Jews. The Haidamaks hung up together a nobleman, a Jew, a monk and a dog, and fastened the mocking inscription thereto, “All are equal.” The most inhuman cruelties were inflicted upon captives and the defenceless. In addition came the Turks, who under the disguise of saviours of Poland, also murdered and plundered on every side. The Ukraine, Podolia, and especially the southern provinces of Poland were turned into deserts.

These misfortunes were more advantageous than injurious to the neo-Chassidim. They also spread in the North, and whilst hitherto they had only been able to carry on their cult in small and comparatively young communities, from this time they gained ground in the large and old congregations. Their numbers had already grown to such an extent that they formed two sects—the Mizriczians and the Karlinians—the former so-called after their original home, and the latter after the village of Karlin, near to Pinsk. The Karlinians spread as far as Wilna and Brody. At first they proceeded cautiously. As soon as at least ten persons had assembled, they looked for a room (Stübel) in which to conduct their services; there they practised the rites of their creed, and sought to gain new adherents; but all this was skilfully done, so that nothing should come to light before they had secured a firm foothold. In Lithuania their system was not yet known, and thus at first they aroused no suspicion.

The first violent attack upon them was made by a man whose influence during his lifetime, and

even after death, was prolific in victories, and who, like Mendelssohn might in a more favourable environment, have effected much for the moral advancement of his co-religionists. Elijah Wilna (born 1720; died 1797) whose name, with the title of "Gaon," is still mentioned by the Lithuanian Jews with reverence and love, was a rare exception among the mass of the Polish Jews. He was of the purest character and possessed high talents, which he did not waste on useless studies. Enough is known of his character when it is remarked that in spite of his comprehensive and profound Talmudical erudition, he refused to accept a post as Rabbi, in contrast to most of his fellow-scholars in Poland, who hunted for places, and obtained Rabbinate by artifice. In spite of the marvellous fertility of his pen in many domains of Jewish literature, he allowed nothing to be published during his lifetime, again in contradistinction to contemporary students, who, in order to make a name and to see their ideas in print, scarcely waited till the ink of their compositions was dry. By his disinterestedness, Elijah Wilna realised the ideal formed by the Talmud of a teacher of Judaism, that such a man "should neither use the Law as a crown to adorn himself therewith, nor as a spade to dig therewith." In spite of the superiority of his knowledge and the full and general recognition that was accorded him, he modestly and conscientiously avoided turning it to his own advantage. The gratification that results from research and the desire for information completely satisfied him. His intellectual method corresponded in its unaffected simplicity with his character and life. As a matter of course, the Talmud and all the branches connected with or dependent on it wholly directed his mind. But he disliked the corrupt method of his neighbours, who indulged in hair-splitting, casuistry, and subtleties.

His sole aim was to penetrate to the simple sense of the text, which he carefully examined and corrected, and by rendering the words according to their proper meaning, he blew down the houses of cards which the Talmudists in their over-zealous ingenuity erected upon quicksands.

It required extraordinary mental force to check the highly swollen flood of custom and to rise above the aberrations into which all the sons of the Talmud in Poland had fallen. In this effort Elijah Wilna stood isolated in his time. It seemed as though from his youth he had been afraid of following the errors of his compatriots, for he attached himself to no special school, but, strange to say, was his own teacher in the Talmud. But Talmudical studies did not exclusively occupy his mind. Elijah Wilna devoted great attention to the Bible—a rare accomplishment among his circle—and, what was still more unusual, he acquainted himself with the grammar of the Hebrew language. Unlike his compatriots, he by no means despised a knowledge of other subjects besides the Talmud, but studied mathematics, and wrote a book upon geometry, algebra, and mathematical astronomy. He exhorted his pupils and friends to interest themselves in profane sciences, and openly expressed his conviction that Judaism would be a gainer from such studies. It was only owing to his scrupulous piety, his immaculate conduct, his unselfishness, and his renunciation of every office and position of honour, that he escaped from the charge of heresy on account of his pursuing extra-Talmudical branches of knowledge.

Elijah Wilna, above all, implanted a good spirit in the Lithuanian Jews. He impressed upon his sons and pupils to seek for simplicity and to avoid the casuistry of the Polish method. In Elijah Wilna the beautiful Talmudical saying was exemplified, "He who flees from honours is sought out by



them." At an early age he was widely recognised as an authority and a searcher after truth. Yet even Elijah was seized by the delusion that the hateful Kabbala was a true daughter of Judaism, and contained true elements. He deeply lamented the moral ruin that the Kabbala had wrought among the Podolian and Galician Jews, through the rascally Frank, because they had thrown themselves into the arms of the Church and had become enemies to the Synagogue; but yet he could not tear himself free from it. Even when the danger of these false doctrines was brought home to him directly through the rise of the Chassidim, and he was compelled openly to oppose them, he could not relinquish his blind fondness for the Kabbala.

The neo-Chassidim, or Karlinians, had crept into Wilna, and had also here established a secret "Stübel" for their noisy conventicles. A trusty friend of their leader, and an emissary sent by him, had stealthily introduced their cult into the town, and had won over several members of the Wilna community. Their meetings, their proceedings, and their derision of the Talmudists, were meanwhile laid bare. The whole congregation were greatly excited at this. They were indignant that the Karlinians impudently asserted of the respected Elijah Wilna, "That like his occupation and his belief, his life was a lie." The ministers and Rabbis forthwith took counsel upon the matter. The Chassidic conventicles were straightway attacked, investigations were set on foot, and trials instituted. Writings were found among the Chassidim, which contained the principle that all sadness was to be avoided, even regret for past sins. Still the greatest uneasiness was aroused by the alterations in the liturgy and the disrespectful utterances against the Rabbis. Elijah Wilna, who although he filled no official position, was always invited to the council meetings, and had an important voice in

its decisions, now threw himself heart and soul into the controversy. He beheld in the Chassidic tendency a dangerous continuation of Frank's excesses and corrupting influence. The otherwise gentle and meek man became a thorough fanatic. The Rabbis and the chiefs of the community, together with Elijah Wilna, addressed a letter to all the large communities, directing them to keep a sharp eye upon the Chassidim, and to excommunicate them until they abandoned their erroneous views. Several congregations immediately obeyed this injunction. In Brody, at market-time, whilst many strangers were present, the ban was published against all those who shed tears whilst praying, who deviated from the German synagogal ritual, who wore white robes on Sabbath and festivals, and who were guilty of other strange customs and innovations. A member of the circle of Elijah Wilna launched a vigorous denunciatory pamphlet against the offenders. This was the first blow that the Chassidim experienced. In addition, their leader, Beer Mizricz, died in the same year (1772)—the Rabbis supposed because of the excommunication—and thus they felt themselves utterly deserted. Owing to the weakness of the king, and the eagerness of the neighbouring nations to seize the land, the kingdom of Poland was dismembered. Through this disorganisation the union of the Chassidim was broken, and the separated members became dependent upon the legislature, or the arbitrary treatment of various governments.

Nevertheless, this storm did not crush them; they remained firm, and did not display the slightest sign of tendering their submission to their opponents (Mitnagdim). On the contrary, the struggle only made them more active and energetic. They were not deeply moved by the ban under which they had been placed; this weapon, which had become futile since the contest for and against Jonathan

Eibeschütz, could no longer inflict wounds. The Chassidim, who had already grown to the number of fifty or sixty thousand, formed themselves into small groups, over each of which they elected a leader, who was called Rebbe. Their itinerant preachers encouraged the individual communities to persevere in their tenets, and to let persecution pass over them as a salutary trial. The connection of the groups among each other was maintained in this way; a chief, from the family of Beer Mizricz was placed at the head as the supreme Zaddik, to whom the various Rebbe were subordinate, and for whose use they were to set aside a portion of their income. The possible apostasy of any members through the onslaughts that had been hurled at them from Wilna was met by the order that no Chassidim might read any work that had not received the approval of the Chassidic authorities. Obedience towards their leaders had taken so deep a root in the minds of the Chassidim that they never transgressed any of the prohibitions. Their chiefs distributed among them the sermons or collections of sayings supposed to have been written by Israel Baalshem, or by Beer Mizricz, which emphasized the high importance of the Zaddik, the significance of the Chassidic life, and the duty of despising the Talmudists—vile writings, which were nevertheless read with admiration by the members, who were in a constant state of intoxication. What had hitherto been mere optional custom and usage was now raised by these writings to the rank held by statutes and stringent laws.

After Beer's death, two men chiefly contributed towards the exaltation of Chassidism, one through his unbounded enthusiasm and the other by his scholarship. These men, neither of whom is open to suspicion, were Israel of Kozieniza (north of Radom) and Salman of Liadi, both from the circle of Beer's disciples.



So strong did the Chassidim again become, that a second interdict had to be fulminated against them. This time also the persecution against them originated in Wilna and was instigated by Elijah Wilna. The Chassidim were declared to be heretics, with whom no pious Jew might intermarry (summer of 1781). Two messengers were sent from Wilna to the Lithuanian congregations to pronounce the ban against them. In consequence of this, the collections of Chassidic sermons and other writings, although they contained sentences from Holy Writ, were publicly burnt in Brody and Cracow. In Selvia, near Slonim, on the market-day, in the presence of large numbers of Jews, the ban was publicly promulgated against the Chassidim and their writings (Aug. 21, 1781); but these obsolete methods were of little use. In the Austrian Polish provinces (Galicia) other means were employed by the disciples of the Mendelssohnian school against the stultifying system of the Chassidim. The decree of Joseph II., that schools for instruction in German and elementary subjects should be established in all Jewish communities, encountered a vigorous resistance on the part of all the Jews, and still more from the Chassidim. The small body of Mendelssohn's admirers strove most zealously to bring this mandate into effect, which, it was thought, would improve the demoralised and barbarous state of the people by the aid of culture. Among the most ardent workers for the enlightenment of the Galician Jews was Alexander Kaller. Kaller and his associates obtained a decree, probably from the Court at Vienna, commanding that no Chassidic or Kabbalistic writings should be admitted into Galicia (1785). After the second partition of Poland, denunciations were also levelled against the Chassidim in Russian Poland as being dangerous to the State. Salman of Liadi was dragged in chains to St. Petersburg. Elijah Wilna may also have been the

instigator of this charge, for he persecuted the sect as long as he lived. After his death the Chassidim took vengeance upon him by dancing upon his grave, and celebrating the day of his decease as a holiday, with shouting and drunkenness. All the efforts made to suppress the Chassidim were in vain, because they in fact represented a just principle, that of opposing the excesses of Talmudism. Before the end of the eighteenth century they had increased to 100,000 souls. At the present day they rule in congregations where they were formerly persecuted, and are spreading on all sides.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE MEASFIM AND THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN SALON.

The Progressionists—The Gatherer (Meassef)—David Mendes—Moses Ensheim—Wessely's Mosiad—Marcus Herz—Solomon Maimon—Culture of the Berlin Jews—Influence of French Literature—First Step for Raising the Jews—The Progressive and Orthodox Parties—The Society of Friends—Friedländer and Conversion—The Chassidim—Depravity of Berlin Jewesses—Henrietta Herz—Humboldt—Dorothea Mendelssohn—Schlegel—Rachel—Schleiermacher—Chateaubriand.

1786—1791 C.E.

AMONG the German Jews, in whose midst the battle against unreason actually began, the result was more satisfactory than in Poland. In Germany there arose a youthful activity and energy, an impulse to action that promised to repair in a short space of time the long neglect of centuries, for there suddenly sprang up great enthusiasm, which produced wonderful, or at least surprising, results, and overcame the benumbing effects of apathy. Some very young men tore the sceptre from the grasp of the aged, and desired to preach a new wisdom, or rather to revive and rejuvenate the old organism of Judaism with new sap. The synagogue might well have exclaimed, "Who hath begotten me all these? I have lost my children and am desolate, banished and an outcast, and who hath brought up these?" A new spirit had come upon these youths, which put an end, in one night, to their dismemberment, and transformed them into organs for historical re-construction. Just



as by common agreement they once devoted themselves to the ponderous folios of the Talmud, so now they turned away from it, and devoted themselves to the Bible, that eternal source of rejuvenescence. The translation of the Pentateuch by Mendelssohn inspired them with new spirit, furnished them with a new language, and infused new poetry into them. Whence arose this body of spirited young men? What had hitherto been their course of education? How was it that they were so powerfully influenced? Suddenly they made their appearance, prophesied a new future, without knowing exactly what they prophesied, and, scarce fledged, soared aloft. From Poland to Alsace, and from Italy to Amsterdam, London, and Copenhagen, new voices were heard, singing in harmonious union. Their significance, indeed, only consisted in combined melody; singly each voice appears thin, piping, and untrained, and only when united do they give forth a pleasant and impressive tone. Those who had but recently learnt to read Hebrew, came forward at once as teachers in order to re-establish in its purity a language, which was so greatly disfigured and continually misused. Inspired by ideals to which the sage of Berlin by his magic had introduced them, they desired to pave the way to a thorough understanding of Holy Writ, to acquire a taste for poetry and to awaken a zeal for science. Carried away by their ardour, they ignored the difficulties in the way of a people, both internally and externally enslaved, which seeks to raise itself to the heights of poetry and philosophy, and they succeeded in accomplishing this revival. On the whole they achieved more than Mendelssohn, their admired prototype, because the latter was too timorous to take a step that might have an untoward result. But these youths pressed boldly forward, for they had no reputation

to lose, and represented no interests that could be compromised.

This result was produced by two circumstances, a material and an ideal one. The eagerness of Frederick for money, and for enriching the land, had almost compelled the Jews, and especially those of Berlin, to accumulate capital. Owing to their manufactories, speculations and enormous enterprises on the one hand and their moderate manner of living on the other, Jewish millionaires arose in Berlin, and by the side of them many houses in very affluent circumstances. But what could be done with these riches? To the circle of the nobility and the Court, Jews were not admitted; the stubborn civic world closed its doors against these Jewish upstarts, whom it regarded with envy. There thus remained for wealthy Jews only the literary sphere, for which they had always had a preference. All or the majority of them had in their youth made the acquaintance of the Talmud, and were intimate with the world of books. This circumstance gave their efforts an ideal character: they did not worship Mammon alone; reading in their leisure hours was a necessity to them. As soon as German literature had been naturalised in their midst through Mendelssohn, they included this subject in their circle of studies, either with the serious object of cultivating themselves or in order to be in accord with fashion. In this matter they had an advantage over the Christian citizens, who as a rule could not obtain books. Jewish merchants, manufacturers and bankers interested themselves in literary productions, as if they belonged to a guild of learned men, at a time when the Christian citizens and workmen were engaged in drinking.

Nevertheless the first movement was made in Königsberg, a kind of colony to Berlin. In this town certain men had acquired wealth by their industry and circumspection, and shared in the

culture which was dawning over Germany under the influence of French literature. Three brothers named Friedländer (Bärmann, Meyer and Wolf) were the leaders. To this family belonged David Friedländer (born 1750, died 1834), an imitator of Mendelssohn, who by means of his connection by marriage with the banking-house of Daniel Itzig, obtained influence in Berlin (since 1771), and brought about a close intercourse between Berlin and Königsberg. He afterwards also took part in the promotion of the literary revival among the Jews. It was an event in the history of the Königsberg Jews, when Mendelssohn stayed there for several days while on a business journey. He was visited by distinguished persons, Professors of the Academy and authors, and was treated with extraordinary attention. Immanuel Kant, the profound thinker, publicly embraced him. This trifling occurrence gave to the cultured Jews of Königsberg a sort of consciousness that the Jew could by self-respect command the regard of the ruling classes. Thus it happened that the Königsberg University, at the instigation of certain liberal-minded teachers, and especially of Kant, admitted Jewish youths who thirsted for knowledge, as students and academical citizens. Among these young men, trained partly on Talmudical and partly on Academical lines, there were two at that time who started the new movement, or rather who continued the quiet activity of Mendelssohn with greater effect. These were Isaac Abraham Euchel and Mendel Bresselau, both tutors at the houses of the wealthy and culture-loving Friedländers. Isaac Euchel, through Mendelssohn and Wessely, had acquired a dignified and correct Hebrew style which contrasted most favourably with the corrupt language hitherto employed. His younger companion, Mendel Bresselau, was however more important, for he afterwards took part in the great



contest against the old school. He was a true artist in the Hebrew tongue, and knew how to apply Biblical phraseology to modern conditions and circumstances without over-elaboration or ambiguity. He took as his model the poet, Moses Chayjim Luzzatto, and like him composed a moral drama, entitled "Youth." Supported by two young members of the wealthy house of the Friedländers, Euchel and Bresselau, during the lifetime of Mendelssohn, and at the time of Wessely's conflict with the ultra-orthodox (Spring, 1783), issued a summons to the whole Jewish world to establish a society for the promotion of the Hebrew language (Chebrat Dorshe Leshon Eber) and to found a journal to be called "The Gatherer" (Meassef). They had reckoned upon the support of Wessely, who was already recognised as an authority upon style, and asked contributions from him, "who," as they expressed themselves, "had taken down the harps that were hung upon the willows of Babylon, and had drawn forth new songs from them." The aged poet gladly joined the young men, but as if he had a foreboding of the ultimate result, he warned these from turning their darts against Judaism, and especially from employing pointed satire. The summons of Euchel and Bresselau found a widespread response. They had chosen the right means towards culture, and they satisfied a want that was felt. The Hebrew language presented in its purest and most tasteful form, could alone accomplish the union between Judaism and the culture of the day.

"The Gatherer" found many adherents in the capital of Jewish culture in Berlin. Here numerous literary contributions and hearty support were forthcoming. In this city lived a number of youths who were moved by the same aspirations as Euchel and Bresselau, who fostered an enthusiasm for the Hebrew language, and caused it to

renew its youth. Mendelssohn also contributed a few Hebrew poems anonymously, and from the height of his fame was not too proud to enter into rivalry with beginners. It is characteristic of the newly-aroused spirit that the rhythmical introductory Hebrew verses in the periodical are represented as being written by a young child who modestly begs admittance, as if henceforth not the grey-headed Eliphaz but the youthful Elihu should take the first place and preach wisdom. Fresh names appeared in the newly-established organ, who, under the collective name of Measfim, contributors to "The Gatherer" (Meassef) (first published in the autumn of 1783), mark a definite tendency, a *Sturm und Drang* period of Neo-Hebraic literature. Another pair of friends of Euchel and Bresselau afterwards undertook the editorship; these were Joel Löwe and Aaron Halle, or Wolfssohn—the one an earnest inquirer, the other a bold and violent writer, who first verified Wessely's fears; and, in a dialogue between Moses Maimonides and Moses Mendelssohn, subjected Judaism as it then existed to a scathing criticism.

Two Poles, residing in Berlin, who were numbered among the most accomplished masters of Hebrew style, also belonged to the group of the Measfim; these were Isaac Satanow and Ben Zeeb, but their studies in German culture had an injurious effect upon their moral character. To the small number of contributors to the "Gatherer," also belonged Wolf Heidenheim. He was a strange man, who abhorred equally the crudeness and folly of the old system, and the frivolity and sophistry of the new, and gratified his tastes with severely grammatical and Masoretic studies of the works of old masters. By his carefully arranged editions of old writings, if he did not end,

he at least curbed, the old habits of slovenliness and carelessness.

The cultivators of Hebrew stretched out friendly hands to each other across widely-sundered districts, and formed a kind of brotherhood which spread to Holland, France, and Italy. David Friedrichsfeld was also an enthusiast for the Hebrew language and Biblical literature. He possessed such great tenderness of feeling for the delicate beauties of the language that an ill-chosen Hebrew word caused him pain. He constantly insisted upon pure forms and expressions, and was a cultivated and severe judge. In his youth, Friedrichsfeld chose the better fate, by turning his back upon Prussia which was so cruel to the Jews, and by emigrating to the free city of Amsterdam. Whilst in this town he welcomed heartily with youthful ardour the plan for the study of Hebrew. He also enjoyed the good fortune of celebrating in Hebrew verse the complete equalisation of the Jews in the States of Holland. At his proposition, the Jewish poets in Holland also joined the ranks of the Measim. The most renowned among them was David Franco Mendes in Amsterdam (born 1713; died 1792). He was descended from a Marrano family, and was a pupil of the poet Luzzatto when the latter lived in Amsterdam, and took him as a pattern. A series of occasional poems, in the form of the Judeo-Spanish poetry of the seventeenth century, had gained him a name which was increased by his Hebrew historical drama, "The Punishment of Athalia" (Gemul Athalia). It distressed Franco Mendes to see how the Jews turned away from Hebrew to the fashionable French literature, because the latter produced beautiful artistic works, whilst the Hebrew language seemed smitten with sterility. This disgrace Mendes desired to blot out, and undertook to dramatise the interesting history of



the royal boy, Joash (who, to be protected from murderous hands was brought up secretly in the Temple) and the downfall of the bloodthirsty queen Athalia, as had already been done by Racine and Metastasio.

In France the Hebrew literature of the Measfim was represented by Moses Ensheim (Einsheim), or Moses Metz, who for several years was private tutor to Mendelssohn's children. He was a mathematician of great repute, whose work has been praised by qualified authorities of the first rank. Thus he wrote a work upon Integral and Differential Calculus, which won the applause of Lagrange and Laplace. But he never published any of his writings. He only gave voice to triumphal songs in Hebrew upon the victory of freedom over slavery in France, and some of these were sung in the synagogues. Ensheim obtained an advocate (Grégoire) to procure the liberation of his co-religionists in France, and provided him with material wherewith to defend them. Ensheim formed a contrast to an older teacher in Mendelssohn's house, Herz Homberg, who was a great favourite with Mendelssohn. The latter was deceived in him, and trusted in him too far when he invited his co-operation in the translation of the Pentateuch. Homberg was of a petty nature, relying upon chance, and was somewhat of a place-hunter. Through Homberg, during his stay in Görz, and Elijah Morpurgo, who corresponded with Mendelssohn and Wessely, the spreading influence of the Measfim penetrated into Italy; and the younger generation, who afterwards kept pace with the French Jews, drew their inspiration from that source.

In this manner, the Hebrew language and the Neo-Hebraic poetry became a bond of union among the Jews of Western Europe, and also to some extent among the Jews of Poland, and led

the way to an astonishingly swift and enduring revival. The Hebrew tongue was known to almost all Jews, with the exception of a few ignorant villagers, and afforded an excellent medium for propagating European culture. Thousands of youths who studied the Talmud in various colleges, gradually, and for the greater part secretly, took an active share in the movement, and drank deep draughts from the stream of innovations. Thus there arose, combined with the expected spread of the deliverance from political oppression which had already taken place in various places, a peculiar excitement and confusion. The old and the new mingled together, forming a kind of spiritual hotch-potch. The question was raised whether, according to the Talmud, it was allowed or forbidden to engage in Biblical studies and profane literature, to cultivate philosophy, and to study the sciences (Chochmot)? The great Rabbis—Ezekiel Landau, Raphael Cohen, and others condemned such studies, whilst Mendelssohn and Wessely, blamelessly pious men, not only permitted them, but even recommended them for the elevation of Judaism. Of the old and respected authorities, some permitted such studies and even occupied themselves therein, whilst others prohibited and held aloof from them, as from some seductive sin. These important questions presented themselves to thinking Jewish young men, and gave rise to much disquietude. For the greater number the excitement of novelty settled the question; the attractive words of the representatives of the new tendency, together with their own inclinations, induced men to cast off burdensome ritual fetters. The number of writers to the periodical, "The Gatherer," increased from year to year. The death of Mendelssohn exerted a decided influence upon the fluctuating balance. His pupils—and as such all the Measfim regarded themselves—deified

him, and glorified in bright colours the eventful history of his life in prose and verse, depicted him as an ideal worthy of imitation, and made use of his renown for their own interests. Already the circle of the Measfim had gone a step further, or widened the extent of its activity. They aimed not merely at ennobling the Hebrew language, but also at its purification. This body called itself "The Society for the Good and the Noble" (from 1787), without as yet being aware of any final purpose. The all-powerful stream of innovation could not be stemmed by any dam set up by the adherents of the old school. Unskillfully they attempted to vindicate the old system, vastly exaggerating their fears, and thereby lost all their influence.

Thus in almost every large community, there arose a party of the "Enlightened" or "the Left," who had not yet broken with the old school, but whose action bordered upon secession. By the ultra-orthodox party they were denounced as heretics on account of their preference for pure language and form, both in Hebrew and European literature. This abusive name hurt them but little, and rather afforded them a certain amount of satisfaction. The eventful outcome of the work of the Measfim was that they stirred men's minds, extending their range of observation, and leading them to ennobling thoughts and acts; but these writers did not leave behind any permanent results. Not a single production of the circle has enduring value. Their best performance was Wessely's Swan-song, which possesses literary worth, if not much artistic skill. Roused perhaps by the astonishment of Herder, an admirer of ancient Hebrew poetry, that as yet no poet had sung the miracles of the departure from Egypt—whose centre was the sublime prophet Moses—Wessely determined to compose a Neo-Hebraic epic. Animated



by the spirit of the prophets, there poured from his pen smooth, well-rounded, euphonious verses, which unroll before the eye the grand events that occurred from the cruel bondage in Egypt till the miraculous passage of the Red Sea and the wanderings in the wilderness. "Songs of Glory" Wessely called his Hebrew heroic poem, his Mosaïd. And in fact his verses and strophes are beautifully arranged and perfect in form. It is the best work that the school of the Measfim produced. Wessely's epic was so much admired that two Christian poets, Hufnagel and Spalding, rendered the first two cantos into German. The Mosaïd is, however, by no means a masterpiece; it lacks the breath of true poetry, fancy and loftiness of conception. It is merely a history of the origin of the Israelites transcribed into verse, or more correctly a versified commentary on the Pentateuch. This is all the praise that can be bestowed upon the school as a whole; its disciples were good Neo-Hebraic stylists, but scarcely poets of even mediocre power.

The appearance of the "Gatherer" aroused attention in Christian circles. The old assailant of the Jews, Michaelis, could not remain silent. Others greeted it as the dawn of the morning which forebodes a fair day; it was in fact the daybreak for the Jewish race. What denotes a cultured people? Next to civilisation, it consists in forming the mind and taste for harmonious and artistic methods. This inclination and the power of producing it had been lost, owing to external oppression and internal disorganisation, and it was now awakened afresh among the Jews through the organ of the Measfim. Nothing new was required, but merely that the way be prepared for the comprehension of beauties and sublimities of their own literature, in order to elevate the Jewish race to rank among the cultured nations.

In this period, profound philosophical thinkers

were found among the Jews, who, if not first in the rank of importance, yet in acuteness of intellect, almost surpassed Mendelssohn. Three men are especially to be mentioned, who, though trained in the Mendelssohnian system, soon recognised its weaknesses and directed their minds to new paths: these were Marcus Herz, Solomon Maimon and Ben-David. The events of their lives picture on a small scale how the Jewish race, for the greater part, had worked its way from degradation and ignorance to freedom and enlightenment. Marcus (Mordecai) Herz (born in Berlin, 1747, where he died 1803) was the son of poor parents, and his father, like Mendelssohn's, supported himself and his family by copying Hebrew manuscripts. He was brought up on the Talmudical plan in the school founded by Ephraim Veitel. Owing to poverty he was unable to continue at his studies in spite of his talents, but at fifteen years of age was compelled to go to Königsberg as an apprentice. Meanwhile the desire for knowledge soon withdrew him from business and led him to the University, as the Albertine College at that time admitted Jewish youths to the medical faculty. Philosophy, however, exerted a greater attraction upon him. Herz was regarded as being gifted with the "keen mind peculiar to the Jewish nation." Kant, who was then at work upon his monumental system, often saw Herz among his audience. Like the teachers of medicine he showed him marks of distinction, drew him into his circle of intimates, and treated him as his favourite pupil. When entering upon his professorship, according to an absurd and antiquated custom Kant had to discourse in public upon a philosophical subject, and found no one more fitted to act as his assistant than Herz. Several chiefs of the University objected that a Jewish student, however talented and superior to his Christian companions, should be allowed equal

privileges with them. Kant, however, insisted upon his demand, and succeeded in obtaining it. Pressed by pecuniary difficulties, and because a Jew could not be qualified as a doctor at the Königsberg University, Herz returned to his native town and joined the circle of Mendelssohn. He was, however, rather an advocate for the Kantian philosophy. He became at the same time a skilled physician, and pursued this science with conscientiousness and zeal. Owing to his marriage with Henrietta de Lemos, he secured a large practice and numerous acquaintances, as assistant-physician to his Portuguese father-in-law ; and through his incisive wit and versatile knowledge became a noted personage in the Prussian capital. When he delivered philosophical lectures upon the Kantian philosophy, which was still new and but little understood, many distinguished men were among his auditors. Had not the rate of progress in a short space of time been great when notabilities sat at the feet of a Jew to hear his instruction upon the highest truths, whilst men like Michaelis roundly denied all possibility of culture in the mass of Jews? Herz afterwards delivered discourses upon physics, and illustrated the marvellous laws of nature by means of experimental demonstration. Many persons eager for knowledge crowded to these lectures, and even the Crown Prince (afterwards King Frederick William III.) and others did not disdain to enter the house of a Jew and be taught by him. His philosophical lucidity, acquired from Kant and Mendelssohn, contributed towards rendering his lectures upon medicine, as well as upon other subjects, enjoyable and appreciated. Herz was not, however, an independent thinker able to illumine the dark ways of human knowledge by brilliant ideas ; but he succeeded in explaining the profound thoughts of others, and in making them intelligible to all. Through his personality and his influence, Herz made an



important impression not alone upon the culture of the Berlin Jews, but also on Christian circles.

Of the remarkable capacity for culture among the Jews Solomon Maimon was a still more striking example. This Pole, whose proper name was Solomon of Lithuania, or of Nieszwiesz (born about 1753, died 1800), worked himself up from the thickest cloud of Polish ignorance, on his own impulse and without special help, and attained to heights of pure philosophical knowledge, but owing to his scepticism sank into terrible confusion. The story of his life is one full of travel and restlessness, and presents a good example of the love of movement amongst the Jews.

As in the case of Mendelssohn, the philosophical religious work of Maimuni, "The Guide of the Perplexed" (More Nebuchim), was the cause of Solomon's intellectual awakening. He read the book until he seemed bound up in it, and consequently assumed the name of Maimon, swore by the name of the Jewish sage as often as any evil desire prompted him to sin, and conquered by its aid. But whereas Mendelssohn through Maimuni had been led to the right way, Solomon Maimon was led into error, doubt and disbelief, and to the end of his life lived an aimless existence. Urged by scepticism he studied the Kabbala, wishing to become a Jewish Faust, to conjure up spirits who would obtain deep wisdom for him; he also travelled to see the leader of the Chassidim, Beer of Mizricz. But the deceptions practised disgusted him, and he quickly turned away from them. But of what service could he be with his spirit of scepticism in a narrow world of rigid orthodoxy; how could he continue to play the hypocrite? Rumour had already carried a report into Poland, that in certain towns of Germany a freer religious system prevailed, and that more scope for philosophical inquiry was given. At this

period a Pole felt no scruples in forsaking his wife, children and home, and in wandering abroad, and it cost Maimon the less effort, seeing that his wife had been thrust upon him when a child, and it was to his vexation that children were born to him. In order to appease his conscience he deceived himself by the pretext that he wished to study medicine in Germany, and be enabled to maintain himself and his family.

Thus Maimon left Lithuania (Spring, 1777), at the age of twenty-five, "with a long, dirty beard, in torn, wretched clothes, master only of a jargon composed of fragments of Hebrew, Judeo-German, and Polish, with all their grammatical errors," as he himself says, and in this guise he presented himself before an educated Jew in Königsberg saying, that he desired to occupy himself with science. In this ragged Pole was a brain full of profound thoughts, which as he grew older developed into maturity. His journey from Königsberg through Stettin to Berlin was a succession of pitiful troubles. In Berlin, the authorities refused to grant him residence. Those Poles who had severed themselves from the Talmud, and devoted themselves to science, lived in the odour of the worst heresy, and often gave occasion to suspicion. Maimon was sincere enough to admit the justice of this opinion. For moral action, for activity of all kinds, for participating in the work of life, for utilising genius as a lever and securing its spoil from Nature, for freeing mankind from avarice, and for advocating useful moral deeds, for conquering the heavenly kingdom of uprightness and energetic love—for all these aspirations Maimon had no inclination. These were indifferent matters, with which a thinker need not trouble himself. With recklessness and perversity of mind he shunned all active work; to meditate at his leisure and draw up formulas was his chief occupation. In this way he

arrived at no solid goal in life, but staggered from folly to folly, from misery to misery.

To the general public he was first known through his "Autobiography," wherein he revealed the weak points of the Polish Jews, to him the only representatives of Judaism, and also unfolded his own views, with unsparing and cynical severity, just as some years previously Rousseau had done in his "Confessions." He thereby performed an evil service for his co-religionists. His opinions concerning his brethren, which had originated in ill-temper, were later accepted to their detriment as universal characteristics; and what he had depicted as hateful in the Polish Jews were attributed to all others.

This kind of confession, in stolid, stubborn and antiquated Germany, was considered at that time as something extraordinary, and aroused great attention. Maimon's "Autobiography" found its way into numerous circles, and gained many readers. The two great German poets, Schiller and Goethe, became absurdly fond of this cynical philosopher; and the latter expressed a wish to become intimate with him. His fame made Maimon neither better nor happier. Solomon Maimon only did honour to the Jewish race with his mental powers; in his actions he altogether dishonoured it.

The third Jewish thinker of this time, Lazarus Ben-David (born in Berlin 1762; died there 1832), had neither the tragic nor the comic history of Maimon. He was a prosaic, uninteresting personality, who in any German University could have filled the chair of logic and mathematics, and given out year after year the same instruction unabridged and unincreased. For the philosophy of Kant however, Ben-David possessed more ardour and energetic liking, because he recognised it as the truth, and faithfully conformed to its moral principles. This philosophy was well suited to the Jews, because



it demanded a high power of thought, and its realisation by moral action. For this reason Kant, like Aristotle in former days, had many Jewish admirers and disciples. Ben-David was also learned in the Talmud, and a good mathematician. It was perhaps, a mistake on his part to deliver lectures upon the Kantian philosophy when he went to Vienna. At first, the University permitted his discourses in its halls, and this to a Jew and a philosophy which denied the validity of Catholicism. He had soon however to leave; but Count Harrach offered him his palace as a lecture-room. Here also he met with obstacles, left the Imperial city, continued his discourses in Berlin, and for some time acted as editor of a journal. Ben-David produced but little impression upon the course of Jewish history in modern times.

The German Jews, however, owing to the instigation of Mendelssohn, not only elevated themselves with great rapidity to the height of culture, but unmistakably promoted on all sides the spread of cultivated self-dependence in Christian circles. Intellectual Jews and Jewesses indeed created within Berlin that cultured public tone which has become the especial property of this capital, and has had its effects upon all Germany. Jews and Jewesses founded a salon for intellectual intercourse, in which the elements of elevated thought, taste, poetry, and criticism mingled together in a graceful, light form, and were discussed, and made accessible to men of different vocations. The Christian populace of Berlin at the time of Frederick the Great, and his successor greatly resembled that of a petty town. The nobility and high dignitaries were too aristocratic and uneducated to trouble themselves about matters of culture and the outside world. For them the Court and the petty events of everyday life formed their great world. The learned represented an exclusive guild, and there was

no higher or wealthier civic class. The middle classes lived according to the manner of their old-fashioned German fathers; held their assemblies chiefly over the beer-jug, and were continually engaged in repeating stories of "the victories of the old Fritz." At the same time, the women lived respectably and in retirement behind their lattice-work, or occupied themselves with the history of the family circle. With the Jews of Berlin it was entirely different. All, or most of them at least, till attaining manhood, were more or less engaged with the Talmud; their mental powers were awakened, and susceptible to fresh influences. These new elements of refinement Mendelssohn gave them through his version of the Bible, and his philosophical and æsthetic writings. In Jewish circles, knowledge procured even more distinction than riches; the ignorant man, however wealthy, was held up as a butt for contempt. Every Jew, whatever his means, prided himself on possessing a collection of old and new books, and, when possible, sought to know their contents, so that he might not be wanting in conversation. Every well-informed Jew lived in two worlds, that of business, and that of books. In consequence of the impulse given by Mendelssohn, the younger generation occupied itself with fine arts, philology, and philosophy. The materials of study had changed, but the form and yearning for knowledge remained or became still stronger. Amongst the Jews of Berlin shortly after the death of Mendelssohn, were more than a hundred young men, who burned with zeal for knowledge and culture, and from whose midst the fellow-workers in the periodical, "Ha-Measef" were supplied.

To this inclination for the development of study, there was added a fashionable folly. Owing to Frederick the Great, French literature became acclimatised in Prussia, and Jews were especially

attracted by the sparkling intellectuality of French wit. Voltaire had more admirers in the tents of Jacob than in German houses. Jewish youth ravenously flung themselves upon French literature and appropriated its forms; French frivolity naturally made its entry at the same time. The wise daughters of Israel also ardently devoted themselves to this fashionable folly; they learned French at first for the purpose of conversing in the fashionable language with the youthful cavaliers who took loans from their fathers. This language became a kind of ornament with which they decked themselves. Through the influence of Mendelssohn and Lessing, such trifling on the part of the women gave way to earnest endeavours for the acquisition of culture in order to occupy an equally exalted footing with the men. The daughters of Mendelssohn, who were continually in the society of cultivated men, led the way and stirred up emulation. In no town of Germany were there so many cultured Jewish maidens and young women as in Berlin, for they learned easily and were industrious, and were altogether superior to their Christian sisters in knowledge of literature.

Mendelssohn's house became the centre for scientific and literary intercourse, and was the more frequented as his friends might expect to meet distinguished strangers there who felt themselves attracted by his wide-spread renown, and from whom something new might be learned. His daughters were admitted to this witty and charming society, to which they also introduced their young lady friends. After the death of Mendelssohn, David Friedländer and Marcus Herz took his place. Friedländer was, however, too stiff and homely to exercise any power of attraction. Thus the house of Herz became the headquarters of the friends of Mendelssohn, who increased in large numbers. Herz was a well-known physician, and had a wide



circle of acquaintances among distinguished Jewish and Christian families. His lectures attracted persons of various ranks to his house, and those eager for knowledge were admitted into the intimacy of the family circle. Herz was master of a caustic wit, with which he seasoned the conversation. But even greater than his science and his genius, was the magnetic influence of his wife. She organised a circle, which every native or foreign personage of importance in Berlin hastened to join. The friendship of the beautiful and gifted Jewess Henrietta Herz was, next to the Court circle, the most sought after in Berlin. Had she not been misled by treacherous influences, she could have been a source of rich blessings to Judaism.

This beautiful woman made her house the gathering-place of the select society of Berlin, and illustrious strangers pressed for the honour of an introduction to her. Here, the Christian friends of Mendelssohn, who had already become accustomed to intercourse with Jews, mingled freely with cultured Jews, and new men, who filled high positions, and diplomatists were to be met there. Mirabeau, in whose mind the storm-charged clouds of the Revolution (to which the Jews were to owe so much), were already forming during his secret diplomatic embassy (1786) to Berlin, was more in the society of Henrietta Herz than that of her husband. Gradually ladies of high degree and education also visited Madame Herz and her female friends, drawn thither by the charm of refined, social communion. Her salon was a powerful attraction to cultured Christian youths, by reason of the beautiful Jewish damsels and ladies who moved around the fair hostess like satellites. These Jewish beauties, however, did not merely form the ornament of the salon, but took an active part in the intellectual companionship, and distinguished themselves by their original spirit. Gentz called them

“the wise wives of the Jews.” Among them were notably two who shone by their greater intellectual qualities, and combined modern culture with Jewish keenness of mind and wit; these were, Mendelssohn’s eldest daughter Dorothea, and Rachel Levin, afterwards the wife of Varnhagen von Ense. Both possessed eminent talents, in addition to which Rachel Levin had an unalterable love for truth, united with gentleness and amiability.

Almost at the same time a Jewish lady of Berlin opened a brilliant salon in Vienna, where authors, artists, nobles, and diplomatists, both native and foreign, came together. This lady was Fanny Itzig, a daughter of the banker Daniel Itzig; she was intellectual, amiable and noble, and was married to Nathan Adam von Arnstein, who had been made a baron. Like her lady-friends in Berlin, she paved the way to the social intermingling of the Jews with Christians in Vienna. This Jewish coterie most triumphantly refuted the foolish remark of the insolent scholar of Göttingen, “that the gypsies would rather permit themselves to become a people than the Jews.” Thus the prejudice of a thousand years was blown away at one breath more effectually than through a hundred learned or eloquent writings.

The social relations and equalisation of the Jews in cultivated circles of Prussia caused them to hope to obtain, if not complete civil rights, at least a lightening of their heavy oppressive taxes and the humiliation imposed upon them. Between the social position of cultured Jews and their legal standing was a deep chasm. In civil quarters, the Jews of Berlin were the first millionaires, which was no indifferent matter considering the important place held by money at that time, and yet, according to the law, they were treated like pedlars. No humane treatment could be expected from the philosophical king. Dohm’s

apology for the Jews passed unnoticed by him. More hope was aroused among the Berlin Jews on the accession of Frederick William II., who was of a weak but kindly nature. Urged on by David Friedländer, the successor of Mendelssohn, who was at the same time considered the representative of Jewish interests, the chiefs and elders of the Berlin community presented a petition for the abolition of the Jewish poll-tax, the repeal of barbarous laws against the Jews, and the concession of freedom of movement. They received a favourable reply, that they should "choose honest men from their midst," with whom the Government might negotiate. This proposal to select delegates from amongst the Jews in the provinces was assented to, and a Commission was established to investigate the complaints of the Prussian Jews and to make suggestions for their improvement. As general deputies of the Jews there were selected Friedländer and his rich father-in-law, Daniel Itzig, who, with great independence and courage, laid bare the barbarous and venal legislation of Frederick the Great in reference to the Jews.

The deputies drew up a list of the imposts extorted from the Jews, bearing ridiculous titles, such as one for the exportation of porcelain, which bound them to purchase articles of the worst manufacture for an exorbitant price (called in mockery "Jews' porcelain") from the royal workshops and to sell them abroad; taxes for the support of manufactories for bonnets, stockings, pocket-handkerchiefs and veils. They pointed out burdensome restrictions, how in certain courts of justice they were never treated on equitable terms, and they especially complained of the responsibility laid upon all of them for each other, and boldly demanded complete equalisation, and not a mere permission to engage in agriculture and all trades, but also to fill public offices and University Chairs



(May, 1787). The expectations of the Jews of Berlin and Prussia were however baffled. Only the compulsory law to deal in bad porcelain was annulled for a sum of four thousand thalers. The degrading body-tax was also repealed when native Jews journeyed from province to province, and was to be imposed only upon strangers who frequented the fair at Frankfort-on-the-Oder (Dec., 1787; July, 1788.) This release from slavery had already been effected by Joseph II. and by Louis XVI. of France several years previously. The high officials therefore advised the abolition of the Jewish poll-tax from a feeling of shame. But many Jews were not content with this reform, because even then Prussian Jews had to acknowledge themselves as such at every public gate, and therefore the stigma attached to this act was not removed. The ultimate result of the petition of the Jewish deputies was lamentable. What the act gave with one hand, it took away with the other. It redounds to the honour of the deputies that they bravely rejected these paltry and narrow-minded offers and remarked, "The favours conferred on us are below our expectation, and hardly accord with the joyful hopes we entertained at the accession of the king." They explained that they were not empowered to accept the reforms offered, "which contain few advantages and many restrictions," especially as regarded the enlistment of common soldiers. Only certain individual Jews received exceptional equalisation of rights. Orders were given that in their official positions they should not be treated as Jews. Otherwise everything continued as of old, and only a slight relief was given to the Jews in Silesia.

Thus the initiatory steps for elevating the Jewish race were taken in the Berlin community, and these efforts were encouraged, if not by the State, at least by public opinion. Through two sources

this action influenced a wider circle — through the Free School (Chinuch Neaim), and the printing establishment connected with it. The Free School was conducted by David Friedländer and his relative, Daniel Itzig, but was managed contrary to Wessely's ideal educational scheme. The subjects of general knowledge were mainly taught, and gradually drove everything previously understood as Jewish (such as Hebrew, the Bible, the Talmud), from the school syllabus. In ten years (1781-1791) over five hundred well-taught pupils passed through the school, and became the apostles of the Berlin spirit by spreading its influence in all directions. This became a model school for German and other communities. With similar effect the printing-press sent forth a large number of instructive works in Hebrew and German into the Ghetto. The spirit at first engendered thereby was one of scepticism, of superficial enlightenment. Its first aim was to eradicate from Jewish life and manners everything that offended cultured taste or made the Jews objects of derision, but it included in its attack things which did not afterwards recommend itself to the unbiassed, by tending to obliterate everything which recalled the great events of the past, and which caused the Jews to appear as a separate race in the eyes of Christians. The highest aim of the advocates of this movement was to resemble the Christians in every respect. "Enlightenment, Culture" were their passwords, the idols of their worship, to which they sacrificed everything. Mendelssohn had left no disciple of any importance to recognise the great truths of Judaism, and bring them into accord with culture. Men like Euchel, Löwe, Friedländer, Herz, and almost the whole of the band of the Measim, only possessed mediocre minds and limited views; they were unable to scatter abroad fruit-bearing germs of thought. Despite all their enthusiasm for Men-

delssohn, they did not appreciate the essence of his nature, and thought they had him still in their midst, when he had already long forsaken them. Even his own children, his accomplished daughters, misunderstood him; and this misconception resulted in great confusion.

With every step forward taken by the Berlin school of enlightenment, it became more opposed to the main body of Judaism, vexing its susceptibilities and thereby frustrating its own efficacy. Misunderstandings, bitter feelings, friction and strife were the direct consequences.

The ultra-orthodox party however numbered still fewer men of importance than the advanced school. The most eminent leader among them, Ezekiel Landau, in Prague, who was regarded as the head, had not the slightest sympathy with the new tendency, but thoughtlessly clung to every usage however unjustifiable, and thereby disgraced the cause he represented. He would only condemn and denounce as heretics those who withdrew from the well-trodden path.

Owing to the friction between the progressive and the orthodox parties, both of whom exceeded all proper bounds, there sprang up in the Berlin community an exciting quarrel. Young men, such as private tutors, merchants' apprentices, the sons of the rich, and fashionable youths, boasted of a frivolous philosophy, and despised their aged parents, considering everything that interfered with their pleasures as superstition, prejudice, and Rabbinical folly. The adherents of the old views therefore grew the more tenacious, and held to everything that bore a religious stamp. As the orthodox communal leaders still kept possession of the benevolent institutions, they refused their support to the partisans of enlightenment, would not admit their sick into a Jewish hospital, and denied the dead an honourable burial. In



short, all the incidents that usually accompany religious party conflicts re-appeared. Those without families, to whom belonged the two chiefs of the Measfim, Euchel and Wolfsohn, determined to unite together so as not to stand isolated against the orthodox party. They desired to form a union, which should protect its members. Mendelssohn's eldest son, Joseph, was very zealous in promoting such a union, and on the strength of his name met with plenty of assistance. Thus the "Society of Friends" was formed (1792), an enlightened community within the community, comprising solely young men whose chief aim was to regard each other as brothers, and to support each other in distress and illness; but their collateral intention was to spread culture and to promote enlightenment. The "Friends" took a saying of Mendelssohn as their motto, "To seek for truth, to love the beautiful, to desire the good, to do the best." A bundle of staves was their symbol. In the first year of its existence, the Union numbered more than a hundred members from the capital. Young men in Königsberg, Breslau and Vienna, joined the ranks. A bond of cordial brotherhood held the members together, and to the present day, a fraternal feeling of careful benevolence has survived in the Society. But it was only a feeble attempt. The Society floated in the air without a firm basis; it had neither roots in its own midst, nor in Judaism, nor did it attach itself to any great political ideal. It aimed at bodily welfare and quietude, as if civilised men could live on bread alone: the catchwords and phrases of culture and enlightenment did not avail much. The struggle against the old régime was but weak; all that its partizans succeeded in doing was to keep their deceased friends longer above the earth before interment. In short, the "Society

of Friends" lacked that quality which alone ultimately bears fruit, the leaven of inspiration.

If the members of this Society took up no firm attitude, those who never knew of any ideal nor even of a dreamy striving, the commonplace men who were mere slaves, and who sought their whole happiness in mixing with Christians, acted yet more culpably. The old system had no charms for them, and the new one no tangible form to attract them. The example of the Court and high circles of society also exercised an evil influence upon the Jews of the large towns of Prussia. "Under Frederick William II.," as Mirabeau remarks from his own observation, "Prussia had fallen into a condition of rottenness, without having attained the stage of maturity." The Jewish youths of wealthy houses followed the general inclination to sensual pleasures. Not secretly, but openly in the light of day, they overleapt all bounds, and with contempt of Judaism united a contempt for chastity and morality. They were the apes of other apes. The most earnest men, such as David Friedländer, Lazarus Ben-David and Saul Asher deplored the decay of morality among the Jews, without noticing that their own shallow desire for enlightenment had contributed to it.

"A want of virtue has spread in our midst, which our fathers knew not, and which at any price has been bought too dearly. Irreligion, voluptuousness and effeminacy, weeds that spring from the misuse of enlightenment and culture, have alas taken root amongst us, and chiefly in the principal towns we are reproached with the fact that the stream of luxury and brutality has swept away our strength and simplicity of morals."

Broken loose from the bond of a national religion which had kept them together for thousands of years, superficial reasoners and profligates passed over to Christianity in a body. "They were like the moths, who fluttered around the flame, till they were finally consumed." Of what use was it to

be galled by the fetters of "general privilege," of what use to continue the disgrace of being "protected" Jews, if by the repetition of an empty formula they could become equal to the Christians! They therefore washed away the indented mark of the yoke and its shame with the waters of baptism. The congregations of Berlin, Breslau and Königsberg beheld daily the apostasy of their members to Christianity; they were the richest and outwardly most cultured people. It appeared as if the words of the prophet would be verified, "Only the poor and lowly people shall remain in thy midst." It must be considered as a miracle that the entire Jewish enlightened party in Germany did not abjure Judaism. Three invisible powers kept them from following *en masse* the example of treachery and apostasy: their deep aversion to the dogma of Divine Incarnation, the indestructible attachment to their families and to their great past of thousands of years, and finally their love for the Hebrew language and literature. Without suspecting it, they felt themselves united as a nation, closely bound by the long chain of the history of the Jewish race, and they could not persuade themselves to separate from it. The revival of the study of Hebrew through the Measfim had had a beneficial influence in this direction. Whoever could comprehend the beauties and elevated thoughts of Biblical literature, and could imitate the language, remained a Jew in spite of his secret doubts, and in spite of degradation and disgrace. Thus Mendelssohn provided the new generation both with a poison and an antidote.

David Friedländer alone proved an exception to this rule. Neither Jewish antiquity, nor Hebrew poetry, nor family ties, had any power to hold him firm to his banner, even with half-hearted devotion. The tearing asunder of all family connections, the casting aside of the social duties of



religion, did indeed oppress him. Nevertheless, he proceeded to sever himself from the Jewish community and to desert into the hostile camp. He had striven to obtain for himself and the family of Itzig an exceptional naturalisation with all its rights and duties, but had not succeeded. This pained him, and instead of hiding his annoyance in ancestral pride and patience, instead of working on behalf of his co-religionists so as to surpass the haughty Christians, he coveted the honour of joining them. Friedländer, however, did not desire to effect this desertion alone or absolutely. He therefore together with other fathers of families similarly disposed, in a cowardly manner, directed a letter without mentioning either himself or others by name, to the Chief Consistorial Councillor Teller, who was friendly with Jews. This letter expressed to him their desire for conversion or baptism, under the condition that they might be excused from believing in Jesus, from participating in the rites of the Church, or at least that they might be allowed to explain Christian dogmas according to their own manner—a suggestion equally silly and dishonourable. Friedländer could not conceal the truth that, among the Jews, “virtue was universal; benevolence inherent, as also parental and filial love; the sanctity of marriage deeply rooted, self-sacrifice for the sake of others frequent; and that on the other hand, crime, murder, robbery and outrage were rare.” But this bright side in their servitude seemed to him only a secondary matter. Therefore, in this foolish letter, he libelled his people and its past, called the Talmud (that mental tonic) mysticism, spoke in illogical confusion, now of the harmful character, and then of the utility of the ritual laws of Judaism, and sketched a picture of the development of Jewish history which cannot be excelled for perversity.

Teller disposed of the Jewish fathers who

deluded themselves with a system of Christianity without Jesus, politely, but decisively, as they deserved. They were to remain what they were, for Christianity had no desire for such infidel believers. Friedländer met with an ignominious experience; he remained a Jew, but his children pressed forward to be baptised without conditions or qualifications. His letter meanwhile aroused more attention than it deserved.

If the German Jews, especially those of Berlin, through their intercourse with Christian society, and their interest in literature, gained in external conduct, in forms of politeness and social manners, advantages, not to be underrated—they also lost something for which there was no compensation. The chastity of Jewish women and maidens during their isolation had been of impregnable sanctity; the happiness of family life rested upon this precious basis. Jewish women indeed seldom married for love—in the Ghetto there was no room for the triflings of affection—but the consciousness of their duty afterwards raised their marriage to one of love. This sanctity, the pride of Israel, which filled earnest Christians with admiration, and led them highly to esteem the Jews, became dishonoured by their association with Christians of the corrupt higher ranks.

If the enemies of the Jews had wished to break the power of Israel, they could have discovered no more effectual means than by infecting Jewish women with moral depravity, a plan more efficacious than that employed by the Midianites, who weakened the men by immorality. The salon of the beautiful Henrietta Herz became a sort of Midianite tent. Here a number of young Jewish wives assembled, whose husbands were kept away by their business. The most prominent male member of this circle was Frederick von Gentz, the embodiment of avarice, licentiousness, vice and depravity, and

who was active in the betrayal of women. Henrietta Herz was the first to be entranced and led astray by the notables whom her beauty had attracted. At this time, German Romanticism, which had been started by Goethe's muse, strove to idealize the sentiments of poetry, and to vivify life poetically. This romantic tendency resulted in fostering a false sentimentality and in infamous marriages which were contracted and dissolved at pleasure. Of this so-called Band of Virtue (Tugend-Bund) Henrietta Herz and the two daughters of Mendelssohn were members. They felt themselves exalted and honoured by such close intimacy with Christians of rank; the foolish women did not see the fanged serpent beneath the flowers. With William von Humboldt, an ardent youth, afterwards a Prussian Minister, Henrietta maintained an amatory correspondence behind her husband's back and in the deepest secrecy.

When William von Humboldt married, and Henrietta, who had been misled by her vanity, was forgotten, she entered into an ambiguous relationship with Schleiermacher, the modern apostle of the new Christianity. Upon this conspicuous intimacy, their acquaintances, even more than strangers, soon made mocking observations. Both parties denied somewhat too anxiously the criminality of their intimate intercourse. Whether true or untrue, it was disgrace enough that evil tongues should even suspect the honour of a married lady of a good house.

The ally of Schleiermacher was Frederick Schlegel, the man who stormed heaven with childish strength, that chameleon in sentiments and views, who was first enthusiastic for the Republic and then for a monarchical despotism, and who conjured up the spectres and evil spirits of the Middle Ages. Introduced into the salon of Herz, he became the bosom friend of Schleiermacher,



and resolved to betray Dorothea Mendelssohn. Her father had died with the knowledge that she was joined in happy wedlock to the banker Simon Veit Witzhausen. Her husband surrounded her with marks of attention and love. Two children were the issue of this marriage. Nevertheless, she allowed herself to be led into faithlessness by the treacherous voice of the romantic Schlegel. It was a part of the prevailing tone of this society to utter complaints about misunderstanding and the discord of souls. The immoral teachings of Goethe with regard to free marriages had already taken root in Jewish families. The thought of parting from her husband and children did not restrain Dorothea from going astray. Henrietta Herz acted as go-between in this crime. Dorothea therefore left her husband, and lived with Schlegel, at first in unlawful union. All the world was astounded at this immorality, which dragged the honourable name of Mendelssohn into the mud. Doctor Herz forbade his wife to hold intercourse with this depraved woman. But she herself was at heart an adulteress, and informed her husband that she would not forsake her friend. Schleiermacher, the preacher also took but little offence at this dissolute conduct. Dorothea soon followed her romantic betrayer from one folly to another, was baptised as a Protestant, and finally, together with him, became converted to Catholicism. It was a lamentable sight when the daughter of Mendelssohn kissed the toe of the Pope. The younger sister, Henrietta Mendelssohn, was not handsome enough to enthrall the libertines of the salon. It suffices to indicate her bent of mind when it is noted that she also went over to Catholicism. The consequences of this internal corruption were to render the participators in it tired of life.

Rachel Lewin, another high-spirited maiden, was

too cautious to take part in the frivolous sports of the Band of Virtue. She desired to pursue her own way. But her wisdom and clear mind did not secure her against the contamination of immorality. In one respect she was superior to her sinful Jewish sisters, for she was truthful and wore no mask. When Rachel first made the acquaintance of the heroic but dissolute Prince Louis Ferdinand, she undertook to teach him "garret-truths;" but she rather learned from him the follies of the palace. As yet unmarried, she allowed herself to become an intermediary between him and the abandoned Pauline Wiesel. Rachel Lewin, or, as she was also called, Rachel Robert, in whose veins flowed blood which endowed her with a bright and active mind, by the light of which she could penetrate to the very foundation of things, and pursue the soul and its varying instincts to its last movements, she yet ignored her own origin. She desired to extinguish the breath of God in the variations of history, and had no appreciation for the past greatness of her race. She despised it, considering it as the greatest shame and her worst misfortune to have been born a Jewess. Only in the hour of her death did a faint suspicion of the great importance of Judaism and the Jews escape her:—

"With exalted delight I meditate upon my origin, and the combination of history, through which the oldest reminiscences of the human race are united with the present affairs, through time and remote distance. I, a fugitive from Egypt, am here, and find assistance. The time of my life that I thought my greatest disgrace would I now not lose at any price."

But even in that hour her mind did not see clearly, her thoughts were disordered, and she exhausted herself in fantastic dreams.

These talented but sinful Jewish women did Judaism a service by becoming Christians, Mendelssohn's daughters and Rachel being converted publicly. Henrietta Herz, who had more regard for

appearances, on the other hand, received baptism in a small town in order to avoid hurting her Jewish friends, and only took this step after the death of her mother.

Schleiermacher now inoculated anew the cultivated classes in Germany with a peculiar, scarcely perceptible, antipathy to Judaism. He was in no way a Jew-baiter, in the usual sense of the term; he indignantly protested against ever being called so; but his mind was agitated with a vague, unamiable feeling towards the Jews, against which he could not guard himself. When the foolish letter of Friedländer, referring to the admission of certain families into Christianity, without believing in the Trinity, was published, Schleiermacher expressed himself adverse to their admission. The State should concede to the Jews the rights of citizenship, but only tolerate them as a special sect, inasmuch as they would not surrender their hope in the Messiah. It was quite in accordance with his romantic Neo-Christianity, that from ignorance and confusion, he depicted Judaism as a mummy "around which its sons sit moaning and weeping." He never acknowledged Judaism as the forerunner of Christianity. "I detest this sort of historical relationship in religion." Hitherto, Christendom was supposed to have a certain connection with Judaism and the Old Testament; while the Bible had been the common ground upon which the insolent daughter and the enslaved mother met each other, and for the moment forgot their hatred. To this connection, or its recognition, the Jews owed their salvation in the sad days of excess of Christian faith, or they would have been altogether annihilated in Europe. The Papacy protected them "because the Saviour had come from their midst." This bond Schleiermacher destroyed at a breath. To have anything in common with the Jews enraged him. But were not Jesus, the Apostles



and the early Fathers of the Church, Jews? Schleiermacher would willingly have denied this fact, if he could possibly have done it; but as this was impracticable, he enshrouded it in mystery...

“What? was Jesus only a Jewish Rabbi, with philanthropic sentiments, and a somewhat Socratic morality, with the power of performing certain miracles, as some at least consider them, and of composing neat riddles and parables—such follies as will always have to be forgiven him, though narrated by the first three Evangelists; and could such a man establish a new religion and a Church—a man who is not superior to Moses and Mahomet?”

This plain fact Schleiermacher could not tolerate; for in such case, not only Moses the prophet, but also Moses Mendelssohn, the sage of Berlin, would have been greater than himself. Therefore Schleiermacher removed his Jesus far away from Judaism; he only had in common with the Jews the accident of his birth: he was, however, super-human and still a man, “whose consciousness of God may be called a special existence of God within him,” as it is expressed in this mystic, extravagant, romantic teaching, which thus took its own chief under its protection. Schleiermacher’s sermons were filled with this kind of word-juggling, to which the Jews of Berlin, and especially the Jewish women, listened as devoutly as had their ancestors to the lying tricks of the various false prophets. The school of Schleiermacher, which became the leading influence in Germany, made this intense contempt of Judaism its password and the basis of its orthodoxy.

At the same time, another romancist, Chateaubriand, in France, invented for Christianity new but flimsy supports as it was in ruins and almost forgotten. Meanwhile, if he traced the origin of the arts, music, painting, architecture, eloquence and poetry to Christianity, he, at least, did not deny a share in these merits to Judaism, though only with the intention of claiming for Christianity the noblest features in Hebrew literature and

history. "There are only two bright names and memories in history, and they are the Israelites and the Pelasgians (Greeks)." When Chateaubriand desired to prove his assertion that the poetry of Nature is the invention of Christianity, he cited as examples the beautiful descriptions in Job, in the Prophets and the Psalms, to which poetry the works of Pindar and Horace were much inferior. Chateaubriand gathered the flowers of Hebrew poetry, and wove a beautiful garland for his crucified god from them. But he did not, like Schleiermacher, crush Judaism into the dust by disowning its paternity to the child which grew to be so powerful.

A new Judæophobia sprang from the neo-Christian school, which, as its originators obtained political influence, grew much stronger than that of the old credulously orthodox Christians. It is remarkable that the two-fold reaction, that of the Church, brought about by Schleiermacher, and that of the political world, which is connected with Gentz, had its rise in the Judæo-Christian Salon in Berlin. But in the same year when the effeminate Schleiermacher, in his romantic delineation of himself, calumniated Judaism by describing it as a mummy, there arose a man, a hero, a giant in comparison with these wretched dwarfs, who issued a summons for the Jews to gather round his standard. He wished to conquer the Holy Land of their fathers for them, and, like a second Cyrus, to rebuild their Temple. The freedom which the Jews of Berlin desired to attain by the surrender of their peculiarities, and by self-humiliation before the Church, they now obtained through France, without disgraceful bargaining and without paying this price.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND THE EMANCIPATION OF THE JEWS.

Foreshadowing of the French Revolution—Cerf Berr—Mirabeau on the Jewish Question in France—Isaiah Bing—The French Revolution—Berr Isaac Berr—The Jewish Question and the National Assembly—Equalisation of Portuguese Jews—Efforts to equalise Paris Jews—Jewish Question deferred—Equalisation of French Jews—Reign of Terror—Equalisation of Jews of Holland—Adat-Jeschurun Community—Spread of Emancipation—Bonaparte in Palestine—Fichte's Jew-hatred—The Poll-tax—Grund's "Petition of Jews of Germany"—Jacobson—Breidenbach—Lefrank—Alexander I. of Russia: his Attempts to improve the Condition of the Jews of Russia.

1791—1805 C.E.

HE who believes that Providence manifests itself in history, and that sins, crimes and follies, on the whole, serve to elevate mankind to a higher level, will find in the French Revolution complete confirmation of this faith. Could this eventful reaction, which the whole of the civilised world gradually experienced, have happened without the long chain of revolting crimes and abominations which the nobility, the monarchy, and the Church had committed? The unnatural servitude maintained by the temporal and spiritual powers produced liberty, but at the same time nourished it with poison, so that the freedom acquired bit into its own flesh and wounded itself. The Revolution was a judgment which in one day atoned for the sins of a thousand years, and which hurled into the dust all who had created new grades of society at the expense of justice and religion. It was a new day of the Lord, which commenced "to humiliate all the proud and high, and to raise up



the lowly." For the Jews, the most abject and despised people in European society, the day of redemption and liberty, after their long slavery among the nations of Europe, was also at length to dawn. It is noteworthy that England and France, the two European countries which first expelled the Jews, were also the first to reinstate them in the rights of humanity. What Mendelssohn had thought possible at some distant time, and what had been the devout wish of Dohm and Diez, those defenders of the Jews, was realised in France, with almost magical rapidity.

Meanwhile, the freedom of the French Jews did not fall into their laps like a ripe fruit in the maturing of which they had taken no trouble. They made vigorous exertions to remove the oppressive yoke from their shoulders; but in France the result of their activity was more favourable and speedy than in Germany. The most zealous energy in behalf of the liberation of the French Jews was displayed by a man, whose forgotten memory deserves to be transmitted to posterity. Herz Medelsheim or Cerf Berr (born about 1730, died 1793) was the first who exerted himself to remove those prejudices against his co-religionists, under which he himself suffered severely by word and deed. He was in good circumstances and acquainted with the Talmud. He possessed enough warmth of heart to avoid sinking into selfishness owing to his favourable position, and he was also sufficiently liberal to receive the new tendency originated by Mendelssohn and to spread it around him. He was intimately acquainted with the Sage of Berlin, and strove to disseminate the translation of the Pentateuch in Alsace. Owing to his position, Cerf Berr was enabled to work for the emancipation of his brethren. He furnished the French army with the necessaries of war, and for this purpose had to remain in Strasburg, where no Jew was allowed to

live. As, however, during the war and a famine, under Louis XV., he performed great services to the State, the permission to stay in Strasburg was repeatedly prolonged by the Minister, and he utilised this favour to take up his permanent residence there. Cerf Berr drew many other Jews to Strasburg. Secretly he purchased houses for himself and his family, and owing to his services to the State, he obtained from Louis XVI. all the rights and liberties of royal subjects, and especially the exceptional privilege of possessing landed property and goods. He also established factories in Strasburg, intending to attract Jews to work there and by withdrawing them from hawking to deprive their accusers of all excuse for their prejudices against them.

Although Cerf Berr was thus a useful member of society, and also brought profit to the town, the Germans in Strasburg regarded the settlement of the Jews within their walls with envious glances, and made every conceivable effort to expel both Berr and his friends. This civic narrow-mindedness on the one hand and Dohm's advocacy on behalf of the Jews on the other, as well as the partial relief afforded by the Emperor Joseph, impelled Berr to secure the emancipation, or at least the admission of the Jews to most of the French towns, and to obtain the necessary permission at Court. In order, therefore, to win public opinion to his side, he energetically spread Dohm's Apology in France. The proposals of Cerf Berr were favourably received at Court. From other quarters also petitions were sent in to the French Government to lighten the oppressive measures which weighed especially on the Jews of Alsace and Lorraine. Louis XVI., who was well-disposed to them, was ready to remove any abuse as soon as it was placed in its true light before him. The noble Malesherbes, enthusiastic for the well-being

of mankind, probably at the instigation of the king, ordered a Commission of Jews to assemble, with the object of making suggestions for the amelioration of the condition of their brethren in France. As a matter of course, Cerf Berr was also invited. As representative of the Jews of Lorraine, his ally, Berr Isaac Berr of Nancy, was summoned, and afterwards developed the greatest zeal for the emancipation of his co-religionists. Portuguese Jews from Bordeaux and Bayonne, the two towns where they resided, were also included in the Commission. Furtado, who subsequently played a part in the history of the Revolution, Gradis, Isaac Rodrigues of Bordeaux, and Lopes-Dubec, were members of the Commission instituted by Malesherbes. These eminent men, all of whom were animated with a desire that justice should be dealt to their unfortunate brethren, undoubtedly insisted upon the repeal of exceptional laws, but their resolutions are not known. Probably in consequence of their efforts, Louis XVI. abrogated the degrading law which fell chiefly upon the Jews in the German-speaking provinces of France, that of the poll-tax.

Even more effectually than Cerf Berr and the Jewish Commission, two other men worked for the liberation of the Jews. They appear to have been chosen by Mendelssohn and his friends, and were the incarnation of the Revolution, namely, Mirabeau and the Abbé Gregoire, who was no less zealous than the former for complete liberty. Count Mirabeau (born 1749; died 1791), who was always on the side of the oppressed against the oppressors, was first induced, by his intimacy with Mendelssohn's circle, to raise his voice of thunder on behalf of the Jews.

Filled with admiration for the grand personality of Mendelssohn, and inspired by the thought of accomplishing the deliverance of an enslaved race,



Mirabeau wrote his important work "Upon Mendelssohn and the political reform of the Jews" (1787). Of the former he drew a brilliant picture. The Jewish sage could not have wished for a warmer, more inspired, more clear-sighted interpreter. The liking he entertained for Mendelssohn also attracted Mirabeau to the Jews in general.

"May it not be said that his example, and especially the outcome of his exertions for the elevation of his brethren, silences those who venture, with ignoble bitterness, to depict the Jews as being so contemptible that no respectable class could be formed among them?"

This observation was followed by Mirabeau's vindication of the Jews, in which he set everything in its correct light, both with regard to what Dohm had adduced and what he himself had experienced. He surveyed the long and tragic Jewish history, treating it with different results to those arrived at by Voltaire. Mirabeau chiefly noted in this history the glorious martyrdom of the Jews and the disgrace of their oppressors. Their virtues he extolled freely, and attributed their failings to the ill-treatment they had received.

"It were well for you that the Jews should become better men and useful citizens. Banish every humiliating distinction, open to them every avenue of gaining a livelihood; instead of forbidding them agriculture, handicrafts, and the mechanical arts, encourage them to devote themselves to these occupations."

With lively humour, Mirabeau refuted the arguments of the German anti-Semites, Michaelis and the Göttingen guild of scholars, against the naturalisation of the Jews. It was only necessary to place the different objections side by side to demonstrate their absurdity. Thus, on the one hand, it was maintained that in their rivalry with Christians, the Jews would gain the upper hand, and from another point of view demonstrated that they would always remain inferior. "Their opponents ought first to agree between themselves," he remarked, "as they contradict each other."

Mirabeau foresaw almost prophetically that in a free and happy condition the Jews would soon forget their Messianic king, and that therefore the argument in favour of their permanent exclusion, derived from their belief in the Messiah, was futile.

“There is only one thing to be lamented, that such a highly gifted nation should so long have been kept in a state which rendered it impossible for its powers to develop, and every far-sighted man must rejoice in obtaining useful fellow-citizens from among the Jews.”

On all occasions Mirabeau seized the opportunity of speaking warmly on behalf of the Jews. He took particular pleasure in them and their Biblical literature, and scattered the clouds of prejudice with which Voltaire had enveloped them. As soon as Mirabeau undertook the defence of any matter, the victory was already half won. His suggestions for reform came at the right moment.

*Here* [Among the thousand matters that occupied public opinion on the eve of the Revolution was also the Jewish question. The Jews, especially in Alsace, complained of the unendurable character of their misery, and the Christian populace of their intolerable impoverishment through the Jews.] In Metz an anti-Jewish pamphlet had appeared, entitled “The Cry of the Citizens against the Jews,” which inflamed the worst passions of the people against them. The pamphlet was indeed prohibited; but could such incredible slanders pass away without results? Appearances were really against the Jews. A young Jewish author, the first Alsatian Jew who wrote in French, came forward with a well-arranged reply (1787), which justified the expectation that the Jews would no longer, as in Voltaire’s time, permit such insults to pass unnoticed, but would emerge from their attitude of silent suffering. Isaiah Berr Bing (born 1759; died 1805), well-educated and eloquent, and better acquainted with the history of his people than his Jewish contemporaries, even including the

Berlin leaders, rebutted every charge with great acumen. Several of his remarks deserve to be kept in mind at the present day.

Through these writings for and against the Jews, the Jewish question became prominent in France. The Royal Society of Science and Arts in Metz offered a prize for the best essay in answer to the question, "Is there a means to make the Jews happier and more useful in France?" Nine replies were sent in, mostly in favour of the Jews, one from a Jewish inquirer, one from the Abbé Gregoire, one from Thiery, the member of Parliament for Nancy, three from Catholic clergymen, and one from Salkind Hurwitz the Pole, of Kovna. (on the Niemen), who had emigrated to Paris. That of Gregoire, however, had the greatest effect. Gregoire was of a simple nature, and in the midst of universal corruption had preserved a pure child-like mind.

When these apologetic pamphlets appeared, the storm-charged clouds of the Revolution, which were to bring about destruction and reorganisation in the world, had already gathered. The fetters of a double slavery, beneath which European nations groaned, that of the State and the Church, in one country at least, were at length to be broken. As if touched by a wizard's rod, France turned itself into a glowing furnace, where all the instruments of serfdom were consumed, and out of the ashes arose the French nation, rejuvenated, destined for great things, the first apostles of the religion of freedom, which they loved with passionate devotion. Ought not the hour for the redemption of the most abased people, the Jews, to have struck as was expected? Two of their most ardent defenders sat in the National Assembly partly as representatives of the nation which had so long been deprived by Church and State of their inalienable rights, which were now to be restored to them.



These representatives were Mirabeau, one of the fathers of the Revolution, and the Abbé Gregoire, who owed his election to his essay in defence of the Jews.

At the outbreak of the Revolution, there lived in France scarcely 50,000 Jews—almost half of whom (20,000) dwelt in Alsace—under the most oppressive yoke. In Metz, the largest community, “the pattern community,” only 420 Jewish families were tolerated, and in the whole of Lorraine only 180, and these were not allowed to increase. In Paris, in spite of stringent prohibitions (since 1740), a congregation of about 500 persons had gathered, about as many lived in Bordeaux, the majority of whom were of new-Christian or of Portuguese descent. There were also some communities in the Papal districts of Avignon and Carpentras. In Carpentras there dwelt about 700 families (over 2,000 souls), who had one Rabbi over them. Those in the best condition were the Jews of Bordeaux and the daughter community of Bayonne. Among the Jews of the various provinces there was as little connection as among those in other European countries. Repeated troubles had separated them. Thus it happened that no combined action was taken to obtain naturalisation from the National Assembly, although Gregoire, the Catholic priest, with true love for mankind in his heart, exhorted them to seize this favourable opportunity. In their midst they had indeed men of energy, filled with love for their race, and ready for self-sacrifice, and men of tact, such as Cerf Berr, Furtado, Isaac Berr and David Gradis, but at first no means presented itself whereby their deliverance might be effected. An appeal for unity of action might have been made, but owing to the pride of the Portuguese it would have failed. Therefore, in the first stormy months of the Revolution, nothing was undertaken for the emancipation of the Jews. The

deputies in the States-General or the National Assembly were sufficiently occupied without thinking of the Jews. Besides this they adhered chiefly to the programme of requirements that their electors had given them, in which the emancipation of the Jews was not included. The deputies of Alsace and Lorraine, on the contrary, had received instructions to attack the Jews. The assaults upon the Jews that broke out in the German provinces, together with the storm of the Revolution, first moved their sympathisers to bring their complaints before the National Assembly. It was, perhaps, an advantage that the fruit of freedom did not fall already ripe into their laps, but that they had to exert themselves energetically to obtain it; for thus their liberty became all the more precious to them.

The storming of the Bastille had finally torn the sceptre from the deluded king and handed it over to the people. The Revolution had tasted blood and began to inflict punishment upon the tyrants. In many parts of the land, as if by prearranged agreement, castles were burnt down, monasteries destroyed, and the nobility maltreated or slain. The people, who had been brought up in ignorance by the Church, now released from the chains of slavery, knew not how to distinguish friend from foe, and rushed recklessly upon what lay nearest their maddened gaze. In Alsace the lower classes of the people at the same time made a fierce attack upon the Jews (the beginning of August, 1789)—perhaps incited by secret Jew-haters—destroying their houses, plundering their property, and forcing them to flee half-naked. They, who hitherto had been humiliated and enslaved by the nobles and the clergy, were now fellow-sufferers with their tyrants. The Alsatian Jews mostly escaped for safety to Basle, and although no Jew was allowed to remain there, the fugitives were sheltered and sympathetically

treated. Complaints were made to the National Assembly of the excesses at this first exhilarating breath of liberty; from that Assembly all expected help, and no longer from the monarchy, which had already become a mere shadow. Every deputy received detailed reports of disquieting and sometimes sanguinary events. The ill-treated Jews of Alsace had turned to Gregoire, and he sketched (3rd August) a gloomy picture of the outrages upon the Jews, and added that he, a servant of a religion which regards all men as brothers, requested the interference of the powerful arm of the Assembly on behalf of this despised and unhappy people. He further published a pamphlet, called "Proposals in favour of the Jews," in order to influence public opinion. There then followed the memorable night of the Fourth of August, which covered the French nation with eternal fame, when the nobles sacrificed their privileges on the altar of freedom, and acknowledged the equality of all citizens at the birth-hour of a new order of things. In consequence of this agitation, and from dread that they might all fall as victims in the anarchy, the Jews of the various provinces resolved to present petitions for admission into the fraternity of the French people; but again they acted singly and to some extent with contradictory requests. The Jews of Bordeaux had already joined the National Guard, and one was even appointed captain. They had only one desire, that their equalisation should be sealed by law, and this wish their four deputies David Gradis, Furtado, Lopes-Dubec and Rodrigues publicly expressed. About a hundred Parisian Jews were enrolled in the National Guard, and rivalled the other citizens in patriotism and revolutionary spirit. They sent eleven deputies to the National Assembly, who, for the purpose of removing the ignominy which covered them as Jews, prayed for an express law of equalisation, and



suggested that the example of the French people would induce all the nations of the earth to acknowledge the Jews as brothers. The community of Metz especially desired that the burden of oppressive taxes should be removed from their shoulders and the debts which they had contracted be made void. The community of Lorraine sent a delegate to the National Assembly, Berr Isaac Berr (born 1744; died 1828), who as a man of many virtues and merits, and an admirer of Mendelssohn and Wessely, had great influence. He drew up a petition containing a special request that the authority and autonomy of the Rabbis for internal affairs should be established and recognised by law. The deputies for Luneville and an adjacent community protested against this. It was a long time, however, before the Jewish question in all its difficulty became the order of the day; the National Assembly seemed afraid to discuss the point, for fear of stirring up public opinion still more passionately in the German provinces, where obstinate prejudices and hatred of the Jews existed.

Religious intolerance manifested itself even in the Assembly. On the 23rd of August an exciting sitting was held. The subject of debate was whether the inviolable rights of man, which were to be placed at the head of the constitution, should also include religious freedom of conscience and freedom of worship. A deputy, De Castellane, had formulated this point plainly, that "No man should be molested on account of his religious opinions, nor disturbed in the practice of his belief." Against this motion a storm arose on the part of the Catholic clergy and other representatives of Catholicism. They continually advocated a dominant religion or confession, which, as previously, should be supported by the State, whilst other creeds should be barely tolerated. In vain Mira-

beau raised his bold protest against such presumption.

“The unrestricted freedom of belief is so sacred in my eyes, that even the word tolerance sounds despotic, because the existence of the authority that is empowered to tolerate, injures freedom, in that it tolerates, because it could also do the reverse.”

But his otherwise powerful voice was drowned by the opposing clamour. The clever speech of another deputy, Rabaud Saint Etienne, however, gained the victory for freedom of conscience. He also spoke on behalf of the Jews.

“I demand liberty for the nation of the Jews, which is always contemned, homeless and wandering over the face of the whole globe, and doomed to humiliation. Banish for ever the aristocracy of thought, the feudal system of opinion, which desires to rule others and impose compulsion upon them.”

Amidst strong opposition the law was passed, which has since become the basis of the European constitution, that

“No one should be molested on account of his religious opinions, in so far as their outward expression does not disturb public order as established by law.”

Therewith, one point in the petition of the French Jews was secured. But when the Jewish question afterwards came on for treatment (3rd September), it was postponed, and handed over to a committee. Three weeks after the Assembly was again obliged to deal with the Jewish question. This was caused by the persecutions which the Jews underwent in certain places. Those in Nancy were threatened with pillage, because they were reproached with having bought up provisions and raised the prices. The Jewish question therefore became so pressing, that the order of the day (on 28th September) was interrupted by it. This time it was Gregoire who defended the persecuted. He was supported by the Count Clermont-Tonnerre, a sincere friend of liberty. With glowing eloquence he pointed out that Christian society was

guilty of the subjection of the Jews, and that it ought to offer them some atonement. The Assembly thereupon determined that the President should address a circular letter to the various towns stating that the declaration of the rights of man, which the Assembly had accepted, comprehended all men upon earth, also the Jews, who were no longer to be harassed. The king was asked to protect the Jews from further persecutions with his enfeebled authority. In the meantime this action produced no results for the sufferers. The Jews of Alsace, as before, remained objects of attack. The Jewish representatives of the three bishoprics of Alsace and Lorraine lost patience, seeing that their equalisation was being constantly deferred. They therefore strove to obtain a hearing for themselves. Introduced by the deputies of Lorraine before the National Assembly (14th October), Berr, the indefatigable advocate of his co-religionists, delivered a speech in which he portrayed the sufferings of a thousand years, and implored humane treatment for them. He worthily fulfilled his task. He was obliged to shorten his oration, as the Assembly, which had to establish a new edifice upon the ruins of the old kingdom which had been destroyed, could not spare time for long speeches. The President Preteau replied that the Assembly would feel itself happy in being able to afford rest and happiness to the Jews of France. The meeting accompanied his words with applause, permitted the Jewish deputy to be present as an honoured guest at the proceedings, and promised to take the equalisation of the Jews into consideration at the next sitting. From this time the French Jews confidently hoped that their emancipation would be realised.

Meanwhile, the Revolution again made a gigantic stride forward: the people had brought the proud French sovereign like a prisoner from Versailles to



Paris. The deputies also migrated to Paris, and the capital was more deeply imbued with the excitement of feverish revolutionary zeal. The youthful Parisian Jews, and the more enthusiastic of the immigrants, took great interest in all occurrences. The middle classes also sacrificed at the altar of their fatherland and aided by supplying funds. At length the Jewish question approached its solution. A deputy was appointed to report upon it, and a special sitting devoted to it. But with it was mingled another question, namely, the subject of the franchise of executioners, actors, and Protestants, to whom the Catholic population in some towns did not wish to grant permission to vote.

The report was sent in by Clermont-Tonnerre, and spoke most logically in favour of all four classes. All sincere friends of liberty indeed expressed themselves in favour of the Jews and their fellow-sufferers; amongst these were Robespierre, Dupont, Barnave, and, of course, Mirabeau. The followers of the old school opposed them with equal determination; chief among these were the Abbé Maury, the Bishop la Fare of Nancy, and the Bishop of Clermont. Only one ultra-revolutionist, Reubell, from Alsace, spoke against the Jews, maintaining that it was dangerous forthwith to grant complete rights of citizenship to those resident in Alsace, against whom there was a deeply-rooted hatred. The Abbé Maury produced utterly false, or only partially true statements, as arguments for unfriendly behaviour towards the Jews. The clericals also quoted Voltaire's anti-Jewish writings in order to prejudice the Assembly against that people. In fact, the Assembly had grown weak; and feared to attack the gross prejudice entertained by the populace of the Eastern provinces against the Jews. At the proposition of one of the deputies, the equalisation of the Jews was therefore separated from that of the Protest-

ants, and the resolution ran in this equivocal manner: that the Assembly reserved to itself the right of deciding about the Jews, without determining upon anything new concerning them. This reservation was again repeated at the discussion of the laws for the election of civil officials (8th January, 1790), and from this the Jews were excluded.

Through this evasive decision, however, the Portuguese Jews of Bordeaux felt themselves grossly offended. Hitherto, they had tacitly enjoyed all the rights of citizens, and also fulfilled all their duties with self-sacrificing readiness. Now they were to be kept waiting, like the German Jews, against whom they bore an antipathy not less than that of hostile Christians, for the settlement of their civil status. They therefore hastily despatched a deputation to Paris to cause this injurious resolution to be rescinded. As the population were on better terms with the Portuguese, their request could easily be obtained. The deputy for Bordeaux, De Sèze, spoke warmly on their behalf. Talleyrand, then Bishop of Autun, was appointed to report upon the matter, and concisely suggested (28th February) that those Jews who had hitherto enjoyed civil rights as naturalised Frenchmen should continue to enjoy that privilege. The enemies of the Jews, of course, opposed this motion, for they feared that this decision would also apply to the German Jews.

Nevertheless the majority decided that those Jews in France who were called Portuguese, Spaniards, or Avignonese (belonging to Bordeaux and Bayonne) should enjoy full privileges as active citizens, and the king at once approved of this law. It was the first legal recognition of the Jews as citizens, and though only a partial recognition, at least an example was set by it.

The deputies of the Jews from German districts

did not however attain the same success ; they had to struggle hard for their right of equality. They happened just at this time to light upon a means whereby they could bring pressure to bear upon the National Assembly, and induce them to concede them full citizenship. There were five men who took a great interest in this attempt, and who worked most perseveringly to remove all obstacles. They won over to their side the fiery eloquent Advocate Godard, who greatly aided them both by his pen and tongue. They knew that power was no longer in the hands of the National Assembly, but had been seized by the parties who, having possession of revolutionary Paris, held complete sway over the deliberating Assembly, the king, and indeed over the whole country. The Jewish representatives from Paris, Alsace, and Lorraine therefore turned to them for help. They then prevailed on Godard to draw up a petition for the National Assembly, stating that not only ought their demands to be conceded by reason of the principles adopted by the Constituent Assembly and out of a sense of justice, but that it was in reality a cruelty to withhold these rights. For, so long as their right of equality was not legally established, the people would believe that they were indeed outcasts as their enemies had stated them to be. But even more efficacious than this petition was a scene which the Parisian Jews arranged with their advocate, in the presence of the General Assembly of the Parisian Commune. This really gave the first impulse to all that followed. Fifty Jewish members of the National Guard, adorned with cockades, among whom was Salkind Hurwitz, the Pole, marched as deputies before the Assembly of the Commune, and petitioned that the city of Paris itself should energetically set about obtaining the right of equality for the Jews. Godard delivered a fiery speech in their support. The President of the



General Assembly, the Abbé Mulet, replied to this vigorous address that the Jewish deputies had always shown themselves ready to aid in every struggle for power and freedom undertaken at the time of the Revolution. "The chasm that exists between their religious conceptions and the truth which we as Christians recognise, cannot hinder us as men from approaching each other, and even if we reproach ourselves with having committed an error, and mourn for each others' guilt, at least we can live together." In the name of the Assembly, he promised to support the petition of the Parisian Jews for equalisation. Next day (29th January, 1790), the Jews of Paris obtained a certificate testifying to their excellent reputation, from the inhabitants of the district of the Carmelites, where most Jews dwelt at this time. This document was couched in the most flattering terms.

The six deputies appointed for the district of the Carmelites then went to the State House in order to support and promote the resolution passed in favour of the Jews. One of them, Cahier de Gerville (who afterwards became a Minister) delivered an impressive address. "Are you not surprised," said he, "that this district should have thus hastened to be the first to show publicly their recognition of the patriotism, the courage, and the nobility of character of the Jews who dwelt amongst them. No citizen has proved himself more zealous for the complete possession of liberty than the Jew, none has displayed more desire for order and justice, none has been more bent upon showing his benevolence towards the poor and his readiness in voluntarily contributing towards such objects as were required by the necessities of the district. Let us determine to throw aside all prejudices, and utterly to overcome them. Let not anything that has been the outcome of despotism and ignorance survive the new birth of liberty and the consecra-

tion of the rights of man. . . . Deign to assist us in our just and pressing efforts to secure favour for our new brethren, regard them favourably, and join in their petition, so that thus united they may be enabled to lay it before the National Assembly. Do not doubt but that you will obtain, without any trouble, for the Jews of Paris that which has not been denied to the Jews of Portugal, Spain and Avignon. What reason is there for showing a preference for this class of men? Do not all Jews hold the same doctrines? Are not our political conditions alike for one as for the other? If the ancestors of those Jews on whose behalf we plead experienced more bitter suffering and persecution than the Portuguese Jews, then this long and cruel oppression which they have sustained should give them a new claim to national justice. Finally, look to the origin of these strange and unjust distinctions, and you will see whether there is any one to-day who dares to set up a distinction of rights between two classes of the same people, two branches of the same stem, basing his action upon apocryphal tradition, or rather upon chimeras and fables."

To this speech the President Abbé Mulot replied, bringing into prominence the fact that the report from the district of the Carmelites was certainly to be considered as of great importance on behalf of the Jews.

These speeches at length induced the Assembly to add their favourable testimony to the cause of the Jews of Paris, and to express the wish to the National Assembly that these Jews, most of whom were of German birth, should be put on an equal footing with the Portuguese. The Mayor Bailly, together with his committee, also on the same day passed the following resolution, that as soon as the other districts should announce their approval of the act, the whole weight of the influence of the

civil magistrates of Paris should be exerted on behalf of the equalisation of the Jews. In the course of the following month all the districts of the city, with the exception of the Halles, sent in their approval of the decision of the Carmelite district. Accordingly a deputation of the Commune, together with its President Abbé Mulot, were officially commissioned from the capital (25th February) to present themselves at the meeting of the National Assembly in order to request, or rather by moral suasion to compel that body to extend to the Jews resident in Paris the decree which declared the Portuguese Jews full citizens.

On these grounds certain deputies demanded (15th April) that the Jewish question should finally be placed on the orders of the day. Abbé Maury again opposed the motion and promised to present a memorial which the Jews should be called upon to answer in advance. In order, however, to protect the Jews of Alsace from attacks by the common people, the Assembly again decreed that they were under protection of the laws, and that the magistrates and the National Guard were to take precautions for their security. In this way they appeased their consciences. The king forthwith sanctioned (18th April) the law of protection for the Alsatian Jews, after which the question was not broached again for three months.

Fortunately the Jewish question did not stand isolated, but was connected with other questions. The Jews of Alsace, and especially those of Metz, had to pay high protection-taxes. When the subject of finances came on for discussion, the Assembly had to determine whether this tax should continue or cease. They came to a liberal decision by which they could contrive to make up for the income thus lost, although the deputies were sorely troubled about the deficit. The secretary of the committee of the Crown Lands, Vismes, first showed



how unjust it was that the community of Metz should pay annually to the House of Branca 20,000 francs, which Louis XIV. had in a merry humour handed over to the Countess Fontaine. He therefore proposed that the Jew taxes should be remitted without any indemnification, and that every tribute, under whatever name, protection-money, residence-tax, or tolerance-money, should cease. This proposal was immediately passed into law (20th July) without any opposition. Louis XVI., who seemed by this act to see another remnant of the Middle Ages vanish, at first showed himself tardy in confirming the law (7th August). Ten years previously the Jews of Alsace had presented a memorial to the State Council detailing the misery of their condition, but in vain; they were altogether unnoticed. Owing to the sudden revolution of affairs in a very short space of time, they now achieved more than they had ever dared to hope for.

But the National Assembly could not proceed to deal with the resolution that had been passed concerning the affairs of the Jews of the Lower Rhine—as these districts were then called—to grant them their civil rights. Several had expressed themselves favourably, when the Duc de Broglie intervened with a violent speech. He asserted that the proposed resolution would engender new causes of excitement in the provinces of Lorraine and Alsace, which were already in a state of ferment owing to the action of the clergy who refused to take the oath. The city of Strasburg was likewise greatly excited on account of the Jews, who desired to settle there, as hitherto no Jew had dared to dwell within its walls. De Broglie further remarked that the general body of the Jews in Alsace were utterly indifferent as to becoming free citizens; that the petition presented in their name was the outcome of an intrigue carried on by four or five Jews; moreover, that one of them, who had amassed a great

fortune at the expense of the State (Cerf Berr), was scattering large sums of money most liberally in Paris, in order to gain adherents for the scheme of equalisation. His motion to adjourn this question till the Code of the Constitution had been finally settled was carried by the majority.

The Constitution was now definitely fixed and ratified by the king (September, 1791), but still the German-speaking Jews of France had not obtained the rights of equality which had so often seemed to be within their grasp. The only comfort they could take to themselves in this disappointment was in the words of the paragraph in the "Rights of Man," which said that no one should be molested on account of his religious opinions. Almost in despair, a few days before the dissolution of the National Assembly, the Jews thought of applying for assistance to one of the friends of liberty, Dupont. This man belonged to the Jacobin Club, and had been a Councillor in Parliament. In a speech of a few words he procured for them the equality that they so much desired. He drew the natural conclusion from the above-quoted rights of religious freedom, and said, "I believe that freedom of thought does not permit any distinction to be made in political rights on account of a man's creed. The recognition of this equality is always being postponed. Meanwhile the Turks, Moslems and men of all sects, are permitted to enjoy their political rights in France. I therefore demand that the motion for adjournment be withdrawn, and a decree passed that the Jews in France should enjoy the privileges of free citizenship (*citoyens actifs*)."

This proposition was accepted amid loud applause. In vain did Reubell strive to oppose the motion, he was defeated. Another member suggested that every one who wished to speak against this motion should be called to order, because he would be opposing the Constitution

itself. Thus the National Assembly adopted (27th September, 1791) Duport's proposal and next day formulated the law that all exceptional regulations against the Jews should be abrogated, and that the German Jews should be admitted to take the oath of citizenship. Two days later the National Assembly was dissolved, in order to make way for a still more violent revolutionary assembly. A few days after Louis XVI. gave his assent to this full equalisation of the French Jews (13th November, 1791). They were not required to swerve one iota from their religion as the price of their emancipation; all that was demanded of them being that they should forego certain ancient privileges.

Berr Isaac Berr was now justified in rejoicing at this success, in which he had had a large share. He at once despatched a letter of congratulation to his co-religionists so as to rouse their spirits at their newly-attained freedom, and at the same time incline them to make improvements in recognition of their victory.

“At length the day has arrived on which the veil is torn asunder which covered us with humiliation! We have at last again obtained those rights of which we have been deprived for eighteen centuries. How much at this moment must we recognise the wonderful grace of the God of our forefathers! Even on the 27th September we were the only inhabitants of this great kingdom who seemed doomed to eternal humiliation and slavery, and then on the very next day, a memorable day which we shall always commemorate, didst Thou inspire these immortal legislators of France to utter one word which caused 60,000 unhappy beings, who hitherto lamented their hard lot, to be suddenly plunged into the intoxicating joys of the purest delight.”

“God has chosen the noble French nation to reinstate us in our due privileges, and bring us to a new birth, just as in former days He selected Antiochus and Pompey to degrade and oppress us . . . . This nation asks no thanks, except that we show ourselves true and worthy citizens.”

Berr added certain important remarks, in which he gently pointed out to his French co-religionists several errors into which they had fallen owing to



their former wretched plight, and admonished them to remove these errors.

He also supplied the French Jews with means to enable them to become thorough Frenchmen and at the same time remain members of the House of Jacob. The Bible was to be rendered into French on the basis of Mendelssohn's German translation, and the young were to be so taught that the corrupt German language which they used should be completely banished from their midst. Berr thus came into opposition with a foolish prejudice which regarded the German or Jewish-German dialect as more akin in sanctity to the Hebrew, and as a more worthy organ for Divine Service than the language of Voltaire.

Berr was thoroughly imbued with the conviction that Judaism was in every way compatible with liberty, civilization, and also with patriotism for the country which had restored to his co-religionists their rights as men. Berr was a better pupil of Mendelssohn than either David Friedländer or the Jews in Berlin had been.

With great assiduity and self-sacrifice, most of the French Jews occupied themselves in the welfare of the State which had given them a fatherland, liberty and equality. They destroyed at one blow all the calumniations of their opponents, who had asserted that as Jews they were not in a position to fulfil the duties of citizens. They were ready to come to the front as often as was necessary, and ever willing to make voluntary sacrifices for the good of the State. A large number of the Jews in this time of energy and activity, which severely tested men's courage, threw aside with wonderful rapidity those shy and grovelling habits, which they had displayed when debarred from intercourse with the world, and subjected to general ridicule. When the French legions, inspired by freedom, had put to rout the mercenary troops of Germany, Moses

Ensheim, the Hebrew poet of the school of Mendelssohn, composed a fiery triumphal hymn, similar to the song of Deborah, which was publicly chanted in the synagogue amid rejoicings. The Jews however took no part whatever in the bloody atrocities of the Revolution.

In the frenzy of the Reign of Terror, which like a scourge of God attacked both the innocent and guilty, some Jews also suffered. The familiarity of the Jews with persecutions, their acuteness and the dexterity with which as it were they pretended to be non-existent, as in the saying—"Bend thy head a moment till the storm is passed"—protected them against wide-spread massacre. In general, they were not stirred by the ambition to thrust themselves forward or a desire to take part in affairs; nor did they cause any trouble to the rulers of the hour. Thus the storm of the Revolution rushed over them without any serious results.

The attack upon a belief in God, when the two blaspheming deputies, Chaumette and Hebert, succeeded in inducing the Convention (Nov., 1793—May, 1794), to set up the religion of Reason, had likewise no effect upon the Jews. The intense hostility and anger felt to Religion and the Divinity were only directed against Catholicism or Christianity, by whose adherents despotism was supported, and at the time of the Revolution a civil war had been fomented which claimed myriads of sacrifices. The Reign of Terror, the Massacre of September and the Guillotine, had all served to feed the flame of this hatred which was almost a sad, stern necessity, against men imbued with feudal ideas who were the bitter enemies of freedom. The decree of the Convention ran thus: "The Catholic faith is annulled and displaced by the worship of Reason." This represented not alone the mood of the most advanced men, the Jacobins, but it was also the determination of the French people

to attack the Church and its followers fiercely, because of a feeling that it was their nature to be hostile to liberty. About twenty days after the resolution of the Convention had been passed, more than 2,300 churches throughout the whole country were transformed into Temples of Reason. The law made no decisions aimed against Jews and Protestants. Only the magistrates or fanatically inclined members of clubs in the provinces extended the order for the suppression of religion to the Jews also, and, as it appears, principally in the old German districts. In Nancy an official demanded of the Jews of the town, in the name of the City Council, that they should attend on an appointed day at the National Temple, and together with the clergy of other creeds should renounce "their superstition," and further surrender all the silver and golden ornaments and vessels of the synagogue. Brutal and riotous men forced their way into the synagogue, tore the Holy Writings from the Ark and burnt them, or searched the houses for books written in Hebrew in order to destroy them. Prayers in the synagogues of certain congregations were forbidden just as in the churches. Owing to the spy system which the revolutionary clubs supported, to enable them to oppose the imminent counter-revolution, private meetings for religious purposes were attended with great danger. When the order of the Convention was issued, decreeing that only the tenth day of the month should be observed as a day of rest, and Sunday was thus made a working day, the Mayors of certain cities, such as those of Strasburg and Troyes, extended this decree also to the Sabbath. They commanded that Jewish merchants should display their wares for sale on the Sabbath. In agricultural districts Jews were compelled, both on the Sabbath and on the Jewish Holidays, to mow and gather in the crops, and Rabbis as well as bishops were cast into prison.



David Sinzheim, who lived in Strasburg, and who afterwards became President of the great French Synhedrion, was forced to flee from town to town in order to escape imprisonment or death. In Metz the Jews dared not openly bake their Pass-over cakes until a clever Jewish matron had the courage to explain to the officers of the Revolution that this bread had always been a symbol of freedom with the Jews. In Paris also Jewish schoolmasters were compelled to conduct their pupils to the Temple of Reason into which the Church of Notre Dame had been transformed on the *Décadi*. In the meantime this persecution passed away without any serious effects. With the victory of the Thermidorians (9 Thermidor—27th July, 1794) over Robespierre, the Reign of Terror gradually died away. The populace now determined to resort to milder efforts. The equalisation of the French Jews having been once definitely settled, it remained untouched through all changes of government. The new Constitution of the year Three of the Republic or the Constitution of the Directory (Autumn of 1795) recognised the adherents of Judaism, without any further difficulty, as on an equal footing with all around them, and moreover wiped away the last trace of inequality, inasmuch as the Catholic Church was no more acknowledged to be the State Church than the synagogue. The law laid down the following fundamental proposition: that no one should be compelled to contribute to the expenses of another Church establishment, as the Republic subsidised none. Only the community of Metz had to suffer for some of the fatal consequences of the Middle Ages.

Together with the victorious French troops of the Republic, the deliverance of the Jews, the most oppressed race of the ancient world, advanced from one place to another till it was completed. It

took firm root in Holland, which had been changed into a Batavian Republic (beginning of 1795). Here several energetic Jews, among whom were Asser (Moses and Carolus), de Lemon and Bromet had already formed a club, which they called Felix liberate, and for which they had taken the motto of the French Republic—Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. These maxims of state were generally adopted by the assembled States-General (4th March, 1795). Although the 50,000 Jews of Holland, who formed the thirty-ninth part of the whole population of the country, and were divided into the Portuguese and German communities, were fully entitled to regard this land as a Paradise, they had hitherto been labouring under many disadvantages as compared with Christians. They were only suffered to exist as corporative bodies, like little commonwealths as it were, in the midst of larger ones. That they were excluded from all public offices did not trouble them much. But they were also debarred from engaging in several trades of the Guilds, and this was a matter of great importance to them. They had to contribute towards the ruling Church Establishment and to its schools without deriving any benefit therefrom. In short, they had no lack of vexatious grievances. In Amsterdam, for instance, when any Jewish married couple went to register their wedding, they were compelled to wait till Christians had been all attended to, and besides to pay double fees. On this account the demand for equalisation became more pressing on the part of the German than on that of the Portuguese Jews, the latter being generally treated with distinction by the patricians as being wealthy and of noble birth, whilst the Germans on the other hand were despised as poor, wretched Poles. In the first excitement of the agitation several disabilities of the Jews of Holland or Batavia were removed,

and many voices were raised in favour of their admission to full civil rights. But later on, as in France, writings hostile to the Jews roused public opinion against them. Amongst these the paper by Van Swieden, entitled "Advice to the Representatives of the People," especially produced a great impression.

He asserted that owing to their origin, their character, their history and their belief in the Messiah, the Jews still remained strangers, and could not be absorbed by the State. This statement was in fact accepted by the official representatives of Judaism as correct. For the Rabbis and administrators of Jewish affairs, especially the powerful Parnassim in Amsterdam, alike in the Portuguese and German communities, were decidedly averse to equalisation. They feared that Judaism would suffer from the great freedom of the Jews and from their new duties, such as serving as soldiers.

In a circular letter they explained that the Jews renounced their right of citizenship, seeing that it was opposed to the commands of Holy Writ. Within a short time this declaration was covered with more than one thousand signatures. But few Jews took part in the election of the first Batavian National Assembly (*Nationale Vergadering*), although they were invited to do so. Thus it happened that Amsterdam which contained more than 20,000 Jews did not return a single Jewish deputy. The Jewish friends of liberty in Holland were now in a sorry plight, having to combat enemies at the same time both within and without. They were thus driven to exert all their energy and to be more active in order to overcome this double difficulty. David Friedrichsfeld, a member of the school of the Measim, who had settled in Amsterdam, composed a well-compiled work (about 1795) against the assailants of the Jews,



called "Illustration of Van Swieden's work in reference to the civil rights of the Jews." Next to him, six distinguished and intelligent Jews—most of whom were of German descent—developed the greatest zeal in order to accomplish the emancipation of the Jews of Holland. They were: Herz Bromet, who for a long time had lived in Surinam, where he was recognised as a free citizen, and whence he had brought over with him a knowledge of politics and its ways; Moses Asser, who had been appointed knight of the Belgian Order of the Lion; another Asser, Carolus, together with Isaac de Jonghe, distinguished members of the German community, who were highly desirous of effecting the emancipation of their brethren. Only two men of the Portuguese community participated in the endeavour to obtain equalisation of privileges; these were the highly respected physicians Herz de Lemon and Jacob Sasportas. They presented a petition to the Batavian National Assembly (29th March, 1796), which held its sittings at the Hague, in which they asked for the equalisation of the Batavian Jews as a right; "seeing that they are citizens of the Batavian Republic, possessing the franchise, and that they have already exercised their civil rights, they prayed the Assembly to declare that they should enjoy this privilege in its entirety." The National Assembly received this petition with respect, and appointed a Commission to advise and decide upon it. When the Jewish Question came on for discussion (August, 1796), excitement ran high, and the tension between the parties was great.

Although the emancipation of the Jews in the Batavian Republic had already been recognised in principle and had been practically acknowledged by permission to vote at the election, there were still many opponents to contend against, even more than in France. The Conservative Dutch deputies

in their hearts believed firmly in the Bible, and they considered the writings of the New Testament as the word of God, in which it was said that the Jews were outcasts, and should remain so. The relatively large number of the Jews, their wealth, respectability and intelligence, gave cause for grave fears that they would make their way into the highest offices of the State, and expel the Christians. Sixty or a hundred thousand Jews, in the great territory of France, were lost to view like a grain of sand in the midst of an immense plain, but fifty thousand among two millions, and especially twenty thousand Jews in Amsterdam among two hundred thousand Christians could indeed make themselves felt and effect their purpose. One of the deputies, Lublink de Jonghe, dwelt upon this state of affairs with great emphasis. If the friends of the Jews pointed to America, where this people as in France, had recently attained to full civil rights, then he would bring out into prominence the unequal proportion of numbers, for in Holland the greater portion of the populace would soon assume Jewish characteristics. The noble Portuguese could indeed be admitted to full rights; but as to the German Jews, the majority of whom were outcasts, Isaac de Jonghe quoted Pinto's work against Voltaire, in which he, a Jew himself, had plainly shown the vast difference between the Portuguese and the German Jews. Thus the artificial distinctions of sects, within the fold of Judaism, brought about its own revenge. Great fear was aroused when it was seen that the number of the Jews in Holland might be considerably increased by immigrants from Germany and Poland, whose goal, for a long time past, had been Amsterdam. Opponents to the scheme of equalisation could further adduce the argument that the majority of the Jews did not desire emancipation, and that the six petitioners had acted without authority. Mean-

while, Noel, the French ambassador, took the first step in favour of the equalisation of the Jews, which he caused to be carried out in a somewhat imperious fashion. After a long debate, the complete equality of the Batavian Jews was finally decreed (2nd Sept., 1796), with the additional remark that those who wished could make use of it. Thereupon all earlier provincial and civil laws which referred to their disabilities were abolished.

Most of the Dutch Jews did not receive the announcement of this decision with joy, as those in France had done, when the rights of equality had been granted to them. They had not, in fact, felt the deprivation of liberty so much as to go into ecstasies about their new freedom. They had no ambition to obtain offices in the State, and only saw in this grant of civil rights a burden and a danger to religion. They therefore became embittered against the men who had procured their equalisation and who had broken asunder the bonds which held the two congregations together as a corporate body. Thus there arose causes for dispute and internal dissension in Amsterdam.

The liberal-minded men, most of whom belonged to the German community, demanded that the regulations, which endowed the Rabbis, and to a greater extent the Parnassim or Wardens, with such powerful authority against their members, should, in accordance with the spirit of the age, be entirely altered. The leaders of the community not only refused this demand, but even threatened the petitioners with fines. Upon this the advanced men left the existing synagogue, established their own congregation, and declared that they constituted the real community (Adat Jeshurun, formed at the end of 1796). The conservative members of the old community thereupon passed a kind of interdict upon the separatists, forbade their own congregants to have any connection with them, or



to intermarry with them. Thus the political divergence of opinion at the same time became a religious one. The supporters of the new congregation, Adat Jeshurun, now initiated a sort of reform. They struck out of their ritual the formula of imprecation (v'la-Malshinim) which had originally been directed against the apostate Jewish Christians, but owing to misinterpretation was afterwards applied to all Christians. They abolished the practice of hastily burying the dead, and erected a new and proper bath for their community, instituting other innocent reforms, which, however, were regarded by the strictly orthodox as grave offences against Judaism. The new congregation now succeeded in causing the fanatical leaders of the German community (who were more indiscreet than the Portuguese in their opposition to those who had withdrawn from their midst), to be removed from their posts, probably through the action of the French ambassador, Noel. Among the synagogue officers appointed to replace the deposed chiefs, members of the new congregation were elected. Gradually many of the old party became reconciled to the new order of things and to the aspirations of the liberal-minded section. The orthodox were also greatly flattered when two Jews, Bromet and de Lemon, were elected as deputies for Amsterdam. Many of them attended at the Hague at the opening of the second National Assembly (1st September, 1797), in order to participate in the honour which fell to the lot of the Jewish deputies. They were still more inclined to the party for equalisation when the Jewish deputy, Isaac da Costa Atias, was successively elected to a place as State Councillor to the National Assembly, and finally to the position of President of the same (1798). The head of the Batavian Republic, the Grand Pensioner Schimmelpenink, now set about obtaining for the

Jews equal privileges in real earnest, and without any hesitation nominated qualified Jews to public offices. The first appointment to public posts in Europe was made in Holland.

It was only natural that a sense of self-importance and honourable pride should be awakened in the breasts of the Liberal members of the new congregation, among whom State offices were distributed. It was a source of great bitterness when they saw that the Jews under the German princes were still treated as outcasts or wild beasts. They therefore laid a proposal before the National Assembly, entreating that the Batavian ambassador should be sent to the Peace Congress held at Rastadt, with instructions to ask of the French Republic that the Dutch Jews in Germany should no longer be compelled to pay poll-tax, and on the other hand that all Germans journeying through Holland should no longer be subjected to dishonourable treatment. The National Assembly agreed to this proposition.

Righteous judgment soon overtook the German princes and people, who, stubborn as Pharaoh and the Egyptians, refused to loosen the chain of slavery from the Jews. They themselves were soon forced to become the serfs of the French Republic, and to pay a poll-tax. In Germany and Italy, where the courageous French obtained a fair footing, the Jews were made free. The walls of the ghetto were burst open, and figures hitherto bent now stood erect.

The name of the invincible French, who had achieved wonderful victories in Italy, quickly spread abroad throughout Europe, and aroused terror and surprise even in the most remote countries. Like a new Alexander, the Corsican Bonaparte, a god of war when scarcely thirty years old, now made his appearance, and with a comparatively small army marched to subdue Egypt, and also hoped to

penetrate into India. In less than six months (July—November, 1798) Egypt lay crushed at his feet. But a Turkish army was now on its way to meet him, against which Bonaparte advanced into Palestine. Thus through a marvellous series of historical events the Holy Land became the scene of a bloody war between the representatives of the old and the new spirit in Europe.

[ El Arisch and Gaza in the south-west of Palestine fell into the hands of the French army, which scarcely numbered 12,000 men (17th and 25th February, 1799). The Jewish community of Gaza had fled. In Jerusalem the news of the victories and cruelty of the French created an overpowering panic. It was rumoured that Napoleon was about to enter the Holy City. At the command of the Sub-Pasha or Motusallim, the inhabitants began to throw up ramparts, the Jews also taking part in this work. One of their Rabbis, Mordecai Joseph Meyuchas, encouraged and even assisted them in their operations. The Turks had circulated the report that the French treated the Jews in a peculiarly cruel manner. Bonaparte actually issued a summons to the Asiatic and African Jews to march under his banners, promising to give them the Holy Land, and to restore ancient Jerusalem to its pristine splendour. But the Jews in Jerusalem appear either not to have trusted in these flattering words or to have been utterly ignorant of the proclamation. This was probably only a trick on the part of Bonaparte, intended to win over to his cause the Jewish Minister of the Pasha of Acco, Chayim Maalem Farchi (assassinated in 1820), the soul of the defence of the important sea-fortress of Acco. Had Bonaparte's plan succeeded, after conquering Syria and carrying the war into the heart of Turkey, he would perhaps have assigned a share in his government to members of the Jewish nation upon whom the French could

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rely. But the appearance of Bonaparte in Palestine was only like the passing of a terrible meteor, which, after causing much devastation, again disappears. His dream to become Emperor of the East, and to restore Jerusalem to the Jews, quickly faded away.

Just as the glowing enthusiasm for France, where his enthralled co-religionists had been freed, had created a Jewish poet in Elia Halevi, so too a Jewish youth, whose eloquence was always tinged with poetry, was roused to become a spirited orator. Michael Berr (born 1780, died 1843), a worthy son of Isaac Berr, who had so zealously striven for the emancipation of the Jews of France, while yet in his youth, and endowed with a handsome and noble form and manifold talents, gave great promise in the future. In him for the first time were revealed the effects of the internal combination of the Jewish and French spirit. He was the first Jewish advocate for his people's rights in France. Animated by the ambition of courageous youth and in the glow of his fiery spirit, this young man conceived an excellent idea, at the beginning of the new century, when peace was concluded. A Congress of the princes of Europe was expected to take place. To these and to their people Michael Berr addressed a "Summons" in the name of "all the inhabitants of Europe who professed the Jewish religion," praying them to free his co-religionists from oppression, and to guarantee to them the justice so long withheld. Through the medium of this youth spoke the voice of rejuvenated Israel. Berr's summons was especially directed to the Germans, both to princes and nations, who still treated the Jews living in their midst as branded Imperial serfs.

Berr, who was inspired with love for his co-religionists, preached however to deaf ears, his burning words and convincing arguments finding no response in the hearts of the Eastern European

people. In Austria, Prussia and the numerous smaller German States, the Jews remained in their former abasement. In Berlin itself, the seat of enlightenment, Jewish physicians, however extensive their practice, were not included in the list which contained the names of their Christian fellow-practitioners, but were considered as apart and as if shut up in a ghetto. Two men of the first rank, the greatest poet and the greatest thinker of the time, Göthe and Fichte, shared in the prejudices of the Germans against the Jews, and made no secret of it. Göthe, the representative of the aristocratic world, and Fichte, the defender of democratic opinion in Germany, both desired to see the Jews regarded as a plague beyond the pale of Christian society. Both were antagonistic to the Church, both looked upon Christianity with its belief in miracles as a folly, and both were branded as atheists. Nevertheless they abhorred the Jews in the name of Jesus. Göthe did not indeed express his intolerance against the Jews, but only showed how the current of opinion flowed in cultured German circles.

Fichte, the biassed editor of Kant's work, was more savage and embittered against the Jews. Like most German metaphysicians before the outbreak of the French Revolution, his philosophy was merely of a visionary nature.

Apparently Fichte bestowed great honour upon the Jews when he put them on a level with the nobility and clergy. He did not wish in any way to honour them, but rather to lower them in public opinion. Fichte, the philosophical thinker, stirred up the same ill-will against the Jews and Judaism as did Göthe, the aristocratic poet, and Schleiermacher, the Gnostic preacher.

Should civil rights be granted to the Jews? Fichte expressed himself in a most decided fashion. According to his view, in no Christian State, however

petty, or however contrary to right or reason might be its constitution, should they be emancipated. "The only way I see by which civil rights can be conceded to them (the Jews) is to cut off all their heads in one night, and to set new ones on their shoulders, which should contain not a single Jewish idea. The only means of protecting ourselves against them is to conquer their highly-praised land and send them thither." The history of the world has decided otherwise: new heads have not been set on the Jews, but on the Germans themselves. The Jews should not be persecuted in order to grant them the rights of men "because they are men," but they should be banished altogether. Even the clerical opponents of emancipation in France, Abbé Maury and Bishop La Fare, had not spoken of the Jews in such a perverse and hateful manner. Fichte may be regarded as the Father and Apostle of a national instinctive German hatred of the Jews, of a kind hitherto unknown, or rather never before so clearly manifested. Even Herder, although filled with admiration for the antiquity of Israel and the people when in its Biblical splendour, and who was the first to examine sacred literature from a poetical point of view, felt an aversion to the Jews, which became apparent in his relations with Mendelssohn, whom it cost him an effort to treat in a friendly manner. Herder, it is true, prophesied a better time, when Christian and Jew would work together in unanimous concord to erect the structure of human civilization. But he was like Balaam of old; he pronounced his blessings upon Israel only in a half-hearted way. This growing hostility to the Jews among the Germans was not noticed by educated Jews who dwelt in their midst, and upon whom it had little impression. Only one pamphlet from the pen of a Jewish author appeared at this time. Saul Asher wrote his "Eisenmenger the



Second's Letters to Fichte," but hardly any notice was taken of it.

If the Jews met with no favour in the eyes of those who formed public opinion in Germany, and who had raised it from the level of old customs to a brilliant height of culture, both in the democratic and in the aristocratic camps, but only experienced at their hands repulse and scorn, how much worse was their relation to the great mass of the populace, who were still embedded in the depths of the darkest ignorance and crudeness! Good cause had two noble-minded Christians at the Congress of Rastadt to bring forward the soundest arguments that the German Jews should be raised from their ignominious condition. One of them, an unknown philanthropist, hurled the shaft of ridicule at the stupidity and bombastic haughtiness of the German Jew-haters, and the other, Christian Grund, demonstrated with pitiless logic the injustice with which the Jews were treated. Both desired that the demand of the Dutch Jews (made through their diplomatic representatives) should be supported, that the princes of Germany should be compelled to respect the Jews, and that influences should be brought to bear upon public opinion to that effect. Grund acted as a clever advocate for the Jews; he complimented the Germans in order to win favour with them. "The German Jews," said he, "have dared to approach the German nation, which is capable of great deeds, which was the creator of its own destinies, and did not imitate the actions of other peoples, in order to unite their voice to that of their brethren, and at the public authorisation of the nation to present at Rastadt in a most respectful spirit a petition for the abolition of those distinctions under which they live, and for the acquisition of several rights." The answer of the German princes and rulers was to some extent favourable.

The most disgraceful degradation and humiliation of the Jews consisted in the poll-tax, an impost unknown in countries outside Germany. Of what advantage was it that the Emperor Joseph of Austria and Frederick William II. had remitted it? It still existed in all its hideousness in Central and West Germany, in the districts of the Maine and the Rhine, where diminutive States bordered close on other diminutive States of the extent of a square mile, and where turnpike after turnpike at short intervals presented themselves. If a Jew took a journey for one day he would pass different territories, and at the borders of each would have to pay a poll-tax. A Jewish beggar, accompanied by his young son, once exhibited his poll-tax bill, which amounted to half a florin for six days' travelling, the sums which he had had to pay in various places. The way in which money was raised was more degrading than the duty of paying it. Very often the tax amounted to a few kreuzers, which only the poor who were not exempt from it felt as a burden, and they even had to surrender to the public office the farthings obtained by begging. But the brutal procedure of the officers, and the ignominious treatment at each frontier-line also affected the rich. As long as the French army were encamped in German territory, the Jews escaped paying the poll-tax. But no sooner was peace concluded and the French were withdrawn from Lüneville, than the petty German princes at once re-imposed the tax, whereby they did not aim at raising the small income derivable from this source, but rather at humiliating the Jews. They also inflicted a similar insult upon French Jews who crossed the Rhine for business purposes. They defended their action by reference to the strictly literal sense in which they construed one of the Articles of Peace of Campo Formio, which stated: "All business and intercourse shall at once continue under the same circumstances as

before the war." The French Jews, proud of their citizenship, would not submit to this, severed their business connections with Germany, and complained of the injustice to the French Government, by whom the question was not lightly passed over. The Government Commissioner, Jollivet, despatched a circular letter (1801) to the agents of the French Republic resident in the German Courts, informing them that it was against the wish of the Republic that French citizens of the Israelite faith should be ill-treated like beasts. They must make earnest representations to the Governments concerned, and menace them with retaliation. Several small princes, like those of Solms, gave heed to this warning and forthwith removed the poll-tax; solely from fear of the French were the French Jews freed from it, but it still weighed heavily upon the German travellers or emigrants. Every step towards the removal of oppressive restrictions in Germany was only the result of great exertions.

In consequence of the Peace of Lüneville, the Holy Roman Empire was now, for the first time, dismembered. The representatives of the Empire assembled in Ratisbon, were driven to seek means of bringing their disunited members into some sort of order, or to decide upon the amount of compensation for the damage suffered. A conference of the ambassadors of eight princes was held to settle the distribution of the territory, and this meeting without due reason was regarded as representing the German nation. The German Jews presented a petition to the conference asking for the passive right of citizenship (15th November, 1802). This entreaty was drawn up "in the name of the Jews of Germany," by the State Attorney, Christopher Grund. Which congregations, or what men, zealous for emancipation had commissioned him to do this is not exactly known. It appears that the petition originated in Frankfurt. It



prayed that the representatives of the Empire should remove from the German Jews the burdensome distinctions under which they laboured; that it should throw open the narrow confines in which they were forced to reside, so that for the sake of health and free enjoyment of life, they should be at liberty to select their own dwelling-place in the cities. Further, that it should loosen the bonds by which their population, their trade and their industry were restricted to a fatal degree, and, in short, should restore to the Jewish communities honour and respect by permitting them to participate in civil privileges, and thus, together with the German nation, constitute one united people. The Jews, through Grund, who was authorised to speak in their behalf, cited the fact that they were compelled "to be classed with dishonourable persons, outlaws, and bondsmen." The miserable condition of the Frankfurt community, which after the orders promulgated for the civic regulation of the town in 1616, had been deprived of natural freedom and crowded together into the narrowest limits, served as a conclusive proof of these assertions. The example was adduced that had been set by France and the Batavian Republic in emancipating the Jews; but the Jews could hardly have deceived themselves with the fond hope that the representatives of the Empire would concede so much to them. By this attempt they hoped at least to have one of the heaviest burdens removed, viz., that of the poll-tax, and this point was therefore insisted upon with great vigour. "The most degrading of all these disabilities," they said, "is indeed the poll-tax, which necessitates the removal of the name of Jew from the category of rational beings, to be placed among wild beasts, seeing that he must pay his way when he sets foot upon one soil or another." Contrary to expectation, this petition to the representatives of the

Empire was handed in and supported by the most distinguished member among them, the ambassador from the Electorate of Bohemia or Austria. He proposed the motion "that the Jews of Germany should be allowed to have their civil rights" (at the end of 1802). In the meantime the Partition Conference had other affairs to engross their attention, and its members were unable to occupy themselves with the settlement of the Jewish Question. The petition met with its end among a pile of State papers.

Nothing was to be expected from the German assemblies, as those who watched the course of affairs readily perceived. The Jews therefore directed their zeal towards inducing the various Governments to remit the poll-tax. Two men made their names famous in the struggle to remove this odious impost, viz., Israel Jacobson and Wolff Breidenbach. The former was Court agent and Finance Counsellor to the Prince of Brunswick, and succeeded in procuring the abolition of the poll-tax in the territories of Brunswick-Lüneberg (23rd April, 1803). About the same time, and also for several years after, Wolff Breidenbach strove to effect yet more important results. Breidenbach was born in a village of that name near Cassel, 1751, and died at Offenbach 1829. He was a man of high culture, noble ideals, and of so modest a character that his name has almost been forgotten in spite of all the sacrifices he made on behalf of the German Jews. He was not, like Jacobson, desirous of having his name spread far and wide.

Deeply moved at the sight of the annoyances, and the contemptuous treatment inflicted on Jewish travellers in places where the tax was imposed, which came daily under the notice of Breidenbach in his business journeys, he determined at least to have the poll-tax remitted, and applied himself with all his energy to this task. Quietly he strove

to have the chain loosened, where it weighed most severely. Breidenbach, however, perceived that large sums of money would be required if he wished to succeed in his undertaking, and provide presents to the police magistrates and city clergy under the pretence of giving alms to the poor, and also "to erect beautiful monuments in honour of magnanimous princes" who would allow themselves to be influenced, so that the Jews might remain untaxed and unoppressed. He was not able to meet this enormous expense out of his own means. He therefore issued a summons to the German and foreign Jews (September, 1803) asking them to subscribe to a fund, from which the cost of abolishing the poll-tax could be defrayed. It was well known at the time who circulated this appeal, but out of modesty, Breidenbach did not append his name. By these means, and through conversations with the minor German princes of the Parliament held in Ratisbon, and aided further by the friendly help of the Imperial Chancellor, Dahlberg, and finally by the commands of the princes themselves, who held him in high esteem, Breidenbach ultimately succeeded in obtaining the right of free passage for the Jews throughout the Rhineland and Bavaria. Even the narrow-minded, Jew-hating most noble Council of Frankfort had been moved by Breidenbach's petition to abolish the toll usually exacted at gates and bridges.

Owing to the petition of the Jews to the representatives of the Empire for some civil privileges, however restricted, and the feeling displayed by several princes in favour of removing their bonds, and by other signs, it was foreboded in Germany that the old condition of Imperial serfdom would soon vanish. This rumour struck terror into the hearts of the Jew-haters. They could not conceive the idea that the down-trodden Jews should be raised from their abasement in Germany. This



painful idea induced a whole host of authors, most of whom were Councillors, as if by mutual agreement, to employ all their efforts in various parts of Germany in the valiant task of opposing the deliverance of the Jews from slavery. Among these men were Paalzow, Grattenauer, Buchholz and many other unknown writers, who persisted in their hostility for several years (1803-1805). They displayed a burning and malignant hatred to the Jews which savoured of the days of the Black Death, of Capistrano, Pfefferkorn, and the Dominicans. They gave vent to fits of rage, in order to prevent the spread of enlightenment. In former days it was the servants of the Church who branded the Jews with dishonour. Now, however, the priests of justice assumed this part, and by perversion of justice sought to keep the Jews bound in servitude, for which course Fichte had prepared the way. As soon as the petition of the Jews to the representatives of the Empire in Ratisbon came on for discussion, a German Councillor of South Germany opposed it, urging that a thousand reasons existed why the Jews were unworthy of becoming citizens of the Empire and the Provinces. The greater number and most obstinate of the representatives of this Jew-baiting movement had their seat in Berlin, the city of enlightenment and of the Christianity taught by Schleiermacher. The character, teachings, and past history of the Jews, even the days of their prophets and patriarchs, in fact everything Jewish, were attacked by these cowardly writers, most of whom wrote anonymously, and made the subject of the foulest abuse and vituperation.

The leaders of Berlin Judaism were at a loss how to oppose these systematic onslaughts upon themselves. David Friedlander remained silent. Ben-David resolved to write an answer, but wisely abstained. The parts were now changed. In the days

of Mendelssohn, and for some time afterwards, the German Jews had acted as guardians to the French Jews whenever the latter had any grievances to redress. Now freedom had made the French Jews so powerful and confident that they repulsed every attack upon themselves and their belief with courage and skill. The Jews of Berlin, who on other occasions had always been ready enough to boast of their courage, at the first hostile attack now found themselves helpless as babes. In their perplexity they solicited the aid of the police, who at this request issued an order that no pamphlet either for or against the Jews should be published. This step was regarded by their antagonists as a sign of cowardice or confession of powerlessness. A new abusive tract, entitled "Can the Jews remain in their present condition without harm to the State?" gave additional weight to the accusations against them.

"What were a number of the most wealthy Jews or their fathers twenty or thirty years ago? Hawkers, who crawled about the streets in ragged clothes annoying the passers-by with their importunity to buy some yards of Potsdam hair riband; or rustics, who under the pretext of trading, stole into Christian dwellings, and often did damage to the contents thereof."

These writers made proposals to render the Jews harmless by the means employed in the Middle Ages.

"Not only must the Jews again be enclosed in a Ghetto and be placed under continual police supervision; not only should they be compelled to have a spot of noticeable colour upon the sleeves of their coats, but in order to prevent their increase, the second male child of each Jew should be castrated."

The pupils of Protestant theology and German philosophy proposed regulations against the Jews which not even the Canonical decrees of the Popes Innocent III. and Paul IV. had enacted.

In Breslau there appeared similar libels which inflamed the hatred of the populace against the Jews. Even the well-meaning writings com-

posed in their defence by Christians such as Kosmann and Ramson—"A Word to the Impartial"—admitted the low character of the Jews, and seemed to imply that in every way it would be better for Christians if there were no Jews among them; but seeing that the evil already existed, it must be endured. The honour of the Germans was partly redeemed by a man who really belonged to olden times, Freiherr von Diebitsch, once a major in the Russian service, to whom the love of mankind was no empty phrase. He warmly defended the Jews against the venomous attacks of Grattenauer and his malicious allies (1803 and 1804), and thereby laid himself open to the charge, which was rumoured about, of having been bribed. He was included in the general prejudice against the Jewish race, and "a caricature was drawn representing him as riding upon a sow or an ass." Meanwhile, his well intended but imperfect pamphlets in defence of the Jews were not sufficient to close the mouths of their opponents.

Equally inadequate and fruitless were other attempts at vindication made by some Jewish writers who lived outside Berlin, and who found it necessary to lift their voice in opposition to the general outcry against their people.

Two Jews, one from Königsberg and the other from Hamburg, now hit upon an excellent plan. Both of them recognised that the Jew hatred of the Germans could not be silenced by solid and weighty arguments, but might be answered by ridicule. They were the forerunners of Börne and Heine, one of them being an unknown physician, and the other, Lefrank, an actor. The former, in a satirical pamphlet written under the assumed name of Dominus Haman Epiphanes, expressed the opinion that unless all the Jews were speedily massacred, and all the Jewesses sold as slaves, the world, Christendom and all States, must necessarily perish.



Mankind would benefit enormously by the sale of the Jews: all offences against morality would thereby at once diminish, and the immortal Grattenauer who had originated the glorious idea and had disseminated his own noble abhorrence of the Jews, would be considered as a benefactor of mankind worthy of a public acknowledgment of his good work, and even of a monument and a temple.

The other satirist, Lefrank, called his work "Bellerophon," or the slain Grattenauer. He wished to kill the chimerical monster "Jew-hatred," who rode upon Pegasus. He repeatedly addressed the Jew-baiter with the scornful "thou."

"Thou who hast grafted with so much success jurisprudence upon theology, thou who didst lick up salt in Halle—not indeed Attic salt—thou who hast studied ignorance and stupidity under the great Semler, if thou indeed art so proud of thy Christianity, that with contempt thou dost look down upon the Jews, then pray let me ask thee with what criminals condemned upon charges of high treason, murder, poisoning, robbery and adultery, are thy prisons crammed? First remove from thy midst the scaffold, the gallows, the rack, the scourge, and all the ghastly instruments that have inflicted death upon so many martyrs, none of which objects are to be found amongst the Jews. Throw aside all thy fiendish qualities, and then wilt thou rather pity a people condemned merely to engage in traffic, against its own will, and then accused of guilt because it does traffic. Is deceit really a widespread vice among the Jews? Thy Christian tailor robs thee, thy bootmaker gives thee bad leather, thy grocer false measures and weight, thy baker in his prosperous harvest gives thee undersized loaves. Thy wine is adulterated, thy man-servant and thy maid-servant combine to cheat thee. Thou deceivest thyself—in the innocence of thy heart—with wretched lies and spiteful malice written upon blotting-paper, for which thou didst pay six farthings, and which is not worth six pins, and then canst thou assert that fraud is a vice peculiar only to the Jews? Just count and see whether among the crowd of banks in London and Paris that have stopped payment there is a single Jewish one?" Thou dost only foolishly repeat the silly prattle of the great Fichte when thou dost remark that the Jews constitute a State within a State. Thou canst not forgive the Jews the crime of speaking correct German, that they dress more respectably and that they often judge more justly than thou. They no longer wear beards, which thou canst pull; they no longer speak gibberish, which thou mightest mimic. . . . The Jew for over twenty years has striven to approach the Christian, but how has he been received? How many alterations has he made in his Canonical laws in order to be able to join you; but still ye have turned your backs upon him in spite of your boasted humanity. . . . Yet thy pamphlet appears to display a good omen. An ordinary man believes that winter can

only be distinguished from summer by terrible thunder and hail-storms. Thus is it also with thee. Persecution, fanaticism and superstition are at their last gasp, and by mighty raging make their final effort through the medium of thee before their spirit becomes entirely quenched."

The feeling of self-confidence thus manifested by Lefrank was the surest sign of the ultimate victory of the Jews.

Under existing conditions in which the Jews were apt to underrate and despise their own power, all hope of emancipation was deceptive. In Protestant as well as in Catholic countries, in Prussia as well as in Austria, the populace was even more blindly opposed to them than their princes. In order that a voice to join in the general baiting of the Jews should also not be wanting in Austria, a German Austrian official, named Joseph Rohrer (1804), wrote against the "Jew people." He drew a dreadful picture, especially of the Jews of Galicia, but without mentioning them by name, in which he represented that the Galician peasants were in a lower state than ever, and that the nobility had incomparably degenerated. Pralzon, Grattenauer, Buchholz, Rohrer and the others succeeded in their design. The emancipation of the Jews in Germany could not as yet be entertained. With all his zeal, Breidenbach could not effect the abolition of the capitation-tax in all places. It still remained in force, as a sad reminder and disgrace in certain German provinces. Cannon had actually been brought into the field in order to destroy these putrefying, and deeply implanted prejudices.

A ray of light from the sun of freedom which now shone on the Jews of France penetrated even to Russia. The heart of the Emperor Alexander I. was filled with mercy towards the numberless Jews dwelling in his kingdom. He appointed a Commission to consider a proposal for improving the condition of the Jews. But a Russian Commission takes time over its work, and after two years' careful

consideration of the interests of Christians, and as to the most effectual way of benefiting the Israelites, the ukase was at length passed in 1804. By this law, farmers, manufacturers, artisans, those who had acquired a University education, or who had visited the upper or lower schools, were exempt from the exceptional laws against the Jews. In order to wean them from using the jargon, special privileges were granted to those who would learn one of three languages—Russian, Polish, or German. The culture of the Jews within his kingdom was one of Alexander's desires, who hoped that another Mendelssohn might spring from their midst. Compulsory attendance at schools was not enforced; it therefore depended on the Jewish community to support as best they could the neglected boys' schools (Chedarim). Nor could it be otherwise amongst the millions of serfs in Russia; not one of whom was permitted to visit a school.

A limitation was, however, introduced at that time which nullified all privileges in favour of the Jews. Those who dwelt in the country were ordered to depart within a short space of time and crowd together in the cities. A cruel subtlety underlay this order. The Polish landowners, who from indolence had given over the care of their breweries and the sale of produce to the industrious and trustworthy Jewish managers and farmers, were ruined by the removal of the Jews from the villages, and thus rendered incapable of revolt. This law could not be carried out for the time being, but remained in existence as a dead letter, until later days. The worst result was that the Jews were treated as strangers, although they had been more than half a century in the Polish provinces. Naturally their progress in culture remained in abeyance, being forbidden and persecuted by Rabbinism, and even more so by Neo-Chassidism.



## CHAPTER XII.

### THE JEWISH FRENCH SYNHEDRION AND THE JEWISH CONSISTORIES.

Effects of the Revolution on Usury—Jew-Hatred in Strasburg—  
Bonald's Accusations—Plots against French Jews—Furtado—  
David Sinzheim—Assembly of Notables—Italian deputies—  
The Twelve Questions—Debate on mixed marriages—The Paris  
Synhedrion—Its constitution—Napoleon's Enactments—Israel  
Jacobson—Consistory of Westphalia—Emancipation in Germany  
—In the Hanse-Towns—In Russia—Restrictions in Saxony.

1806—1813.

SINCE the days of the Romans, the world had not witnessed such sudden changes and catastrophes as in the beginning of this century, when there arose a new Empire, which was founded with the intention of establishing a universal monarchy. All the Powers bent still lower before Napoleon, now Emperor of the French, than they had before the First Consul, Bonaparte. The Pope, who in his heart cursed him and the whole new order of things, did not hesitate to anoint him as successor to Charlemagne. The German princes were the first to come forward and cringingly do homage to this Revolution, and the elevation of a usurper over themselves. It appears as if Napoleon on coming into contact with the Germans during his wars against Austria and Prussia became infected with their Jew-hatred, and that his feelings with reference to them from that time underwent a change. Although he had before shown admiration for the venerable antiquity and gigantic struggles of the

Jewish race, he now displayed a positive dislike to them. His unfavourable attitude towards the Jews gave an opportunity to the Germans in Alsace to deprive the French Jews of their privileges and reduce them to their former state of abasement.

The storm of the Revolution had put an end to the old accusations against the Jews of Alsace. Jewish creditors, usurers, Christian debtors were all alike impoverished by the Reign of Terror; the olden times were swept away. When quiet was again restored, many Jews, who through their energy had acquired some property, now objected to their former trades, but what should they begin? To commence learning handicrafts and agriculture could not be expected of men who were advanced in years. There were also great obstacles in the way of Jewish young men, as bigoted Christian employers in the German-speaking provinces would not willingly take Jewish apprentices. A numerous class of the populace of Alsace depended for subsistence upon the well-to-do Jews. The peasants and day-labourers, who before the Revolution were serfs, and had been liberated through it, possessed no means wherewith to purchase dwellings and to commence work. Their cattle and even their implements of agriculture were lost during the stormy years, and many men who had been included in the levy for the army were now dead. The peasants on the return of peace had to apply to the Jews for advances of money in order to obtain small parcels of the National land for cultivation.

The Jewish money-lenders now drove an active business, and probably demanded high rates of interest. The peasants do not seem to have suffered much by this, for although originally destitute of means, they had greatly improved their condition. In a few years their possessions in landed property amounted to 60 million francs,

the sixth part of which they owed to the Jews. It was always a hard task for the peasants of Alsace to yield up their ready money in order to discharge debts to their Jewish creditors, especially as the wars of Bonaparte called away the poor man from the plough to bear arms, and many lawsuits ensued against the debtors. The Strasburg Trade Court of Justice alone, during the years 1802-4, had to decide upon summonses for debt between Jewish creditors and Christian debtors amounting to 800,000 francs. The defaulting peasants were sentenced to hand over their fields and vineyards to the Jewish creditors, some of whom may probably have acted in a harsh manner in these matters.

These circumstances proved of the highest value to the Jew-haters. They generalised the misdeeds of the Jews, exaggerated the sufferings of the Christian debtors who were forced to pay, and stamped the Jews as usurers and bloodsuckers, so as to deprive the French Jews living in their provinces of their recently-acquired equalisation, or possibly to destine them to some worse fate. As at all times, the citizens of the German town of Strasburg took the most prominent part in this movement against the Jews. They had made a vain attempt to expel the Jews from their walls and to persecute them during the Reign of Terror. With fierce rage they beheld the number of Jewish immigrants increase. [There were no Jewish usurers in their midst; on the contrary, there were wealthy, highly respected and educated Jews, such as the families of Cerf Berr, Ratisbonne and Picard, who chiefly lived on their possessions.] Nevertheless the people of Strasburg raised the loudest clamours against the Jews, as if they could in this way check their own impoverishment. The Prefect of Strasburg, a German, cast in his lot with the merchants. When Napoleon stayed in



Strasburg (January, 1806), after the campaign of a hundred days against Austria, he was besieged by the Prefect and a deputation of the people of Alsace with complaints showing how harmful to the State were the Jews. How like a crowd of ravens they ruined the Christian populace, so that whole villages passed into the possession of Jewish usurers, how half of the estates of Alsace were mortgaged to Jewish creditors, and other charges of similar purport which arose from hatred to the Jews. Napoleon thereupon called to mind that in his campaign he had encountered some Jews near Ulm who had bought stolen articles from the soldiers, which had greatly displeased him. The people of Strasburg then suggested that these may have been Strasburg Jews, who followed in the track of the army in order to enrich themselves with petty pieces of booty; and that, further, the Jews were all usurers, hawkers, and ragmen. In order to incite the emperor to further acts of hostility, the following grave statement was added—that, in the whole of Alsace, indeed, in all the German Departments of the Upper and Lower Rhine, the people were so embittered against the Jews that a general massacre, and scenes such as were witnessed in the Middle Ages, might ensue. In tap-rooms the question of slaughtering the Jews was often discussed. His mind filled with such evil impressions Napoleon left Strasburg, promising his assistance against these grievances. That this impression might not fade away, the enemies of the Jews besieged the Minister of Justice with loud complaints about the deceit and general hurtfulness of the Jews. Judges, prefects, all German-speaking officials outvied one another in attempts to stamp out the Jews. The Minister of Justice, carried away by the mass of complaints, was actually on the point of putting an exceptional law into force against the Jews of France by forbidding them for a time to do any business in mortgages.

Mingled with this Jew-hatred which arose from the petty jealousy of members of guilds, and from fear of excessive competition, were also the bigoted and gloomy views of the reactionary party, who commenced to spin their network of schemes in order to suppress all sentiments of mental freedom, the mother, so to speak, of political liberty. One of the chief enemies of liberty, and one most skilled in intrigues, was Louis Gabriel Ambroise Bonald, a man of kindred spirit to Gentz, Adam Müller, and others of like calibre who together with the romancist Chateaubriand, and Fontanes a past-master of flattery, brought about the most terrible religious and political reaction. Bonald, who, after a short dream of liberty, had unfurled the flag of the Bourbon Legitimists, and had glorified it with mystical-Catholic inanities, beheld in the liberation of the Jews a diminution of the power of the Church, and employed means to undermine their equalisation in France. He wished to lower them to the level of such despicable beings as the Church required for its purposes. In a pamphlet which he issued conjointly with Chateaubriand for the purpose of maintaining the Ultramontane power, he vigorously and with sophisticated eloquence attacked the Jews. He envied the Germans because they, being more reasonable and prudent than the French, had only remitted the capitation-tax, but had otherwise kept the Jews in their former state of subjection. He blamed the National Assembly because it had conceded all rights without considering that when the French Jews were released from the yoke, they would easily make arrangements with their co-religionists in other countries to secure all influence and all wealth to themselves and to enslave the Christians. Bonald again gave utterance to that venomous slander which the venal and unconscientious people of Alsace had circulated in a pamphlet before the Revolution. Its purport was that the Jews were

ever at conflict with morality, that they formed a State within a State, and that most of them were vampires and vagabonds, among whom no high-minded person could exist. Bonald concluded his list of charges with the remark that the French nation had degenerated as greatly as the Jews; "if the latter were indeed permitted to enjoy independence and to frame laws, then a Jewish Synhedrion would not establish more nonsensical or unworthy laws than the constituted Assembly of philosophers had done."

It was a fortunate circumstance for the future of the Jews that both the enemies of freedom and orthodox Christians included Jew-hatred in their programme, because this impelled friends of liberty to defend the cause of the Jews in part as their own. But for the present, Bonald's Jew-hating attempts did not greatly harm them. They were approved by those who strove to retard the advancing spirit of the age, and in various roundabout ways were dinned into the ear of Napoleon. The French Jews had no idea of the extent of this agitation, they imagined that it only concerned the Jewish usurers in Alsace, and that it did not affect their own honour, position and existence, and therefore they did not sufficiently oppose it.

Matters now assumed a serious complexion. Napoleon laid the Jewish Question for discussion before his Council, who in turn submitted it for report to a young member, a Count Molé, known in later French history as the prototype of ambiguity. To the surprise of all the elder and more influential members of the Council, Molé, whose great grandmother was a Jewess, presented a report decidedly hostile to the Jews, in which it was decreed that all French Jews should be placed under exceptional laws, which meant that their acknowledged and permitted equality was to be



taken from them. His report was received with deserved derision by the oldest members of the Council, who were so imbued with the principle of absolute equality sanctified by the Revolution, that they could not conceive a creditor who asks for payment from his debtor could have a right to enquire after his religious belief. They suspected that Molé had intimate connection with the retrograde politicians, Fontanes and Bonald, who were anxious to offer up the Jews as the first sacrifice to their reactionary efforts. Molé, however, in coming to this decision, appears to have sought to curry favour with the emperor, who, as he knew, was not kindly disposed towards the Jews. Although all the Councillors were in favour of the unaltered continuation of their civil rights, the Jewish Question was again brought up for settlement at the full sitting of the State Council under the presidentship of Napoleon (30th April, 1806), who attached great importance to the matter.

It was a matter pregnant with disaster that these questions, settled long ago, should again come under discussion. The weal and woe not alone of the French and Italian Jews, but of those in all Europe, depended upon the issue of this consultation. For if the equalisation of the Jews of the former countries was in any way threatened, those of other countries would again be plunged into a state of degradation and oppression; hence the sitting was a stormy one. It happened unfortunately that a State Councillor named Beugnot, who had only been lately elected, and who, in the absence of the emperor, had spoken with great spirit and address in favour of the Jews, determined also to display his eloquence before the emperor. He therefore made use of the following unlucky phrase: "That to deprive the Jews of their full civil rights was like a battle lost on the field of justice." Napoleon there-

upon became enraged. Both the tone and matter of Beugnot's speech sorely displeased him. It vexed him that his prejudices against the Jews should be regarded as unfounded. He passionately attacked Beugnot, spoke against theorists and propounders of principles, and allowed his anger to outrun his discretion. He spoke of the Jews as Fichte had done, saying that they constituted a State within a State, being the feudal nobles of the present; that they could not be placed in the same category with Catholics and Protestants, because, not being citizens of the country, they were therefore dangerous to it. One dared not entrust the keys of France, Alsace and Strasburg, into the hands of a nation of spies. It would be a prudent act only to suffer 50,000 Jews to reside in the districts of the Upper and Lower Rhine, to scatter the remainder throughout France and prohibit them from engaging in trade, because they corrupted others by their usury. He also made other similar accusations which he had learnt from the Jew-haters. In spite of this speech, two Councillors of importance, Regnault and Segür, ventured to speak on behalf of the Jews, or on behalf of justice. They insisted on the fact that the Jews in Bordeaux, Marseilles, and the Italian cities belonging to France, like those in Holland, were held in the highest esteem, and that the offences charged against the Jews of Alsace should not be imputed to Judaism, but rather to their unhappy condition. They succeeded in mollifying Napoleon's wrath for the moment, and a second Council was destined to put an end to it altogether.

In the meantime, some influential persons succeeded in impressing Napoleon with a better opinion of the Jews. He was reminded how quickly they had become proficient in the arts, sciences, agriculture and handicrafts. Persons were pointed out to him who had been decorated

with the Order of the Legion of Honour for courage in war, or who had received pensions, and yet, according to the slanders of their enemies, he was to regard all Jews as usurers and hawkers. At the second sitting of the State Council (7th May, 1806) Napoleon spoke in a milder tone of the Jews. He rejected the proposal made to him to expel Jewish pedlars, and to endow the tribunals of justice with unlimited authority to punish usurers. He desired to do nothing that might be disapproved by posterity, or that might darken his fame. Nevertheless, he could not free himself from the prejudice that the Jewish people, from the most ancient times, even from the days of Moses, had been usurers and extortioners. He was however determined that he would not permit any persecution or neglect of the Jews. He then conceived a happy thought, or it may have been suggested to him, to bring together a number of Jews from various provinces, who could tell him whether Judaism demanded of its adherents to hate and oppress Christians. The Jews themselves, through the medium of their representatives, should decide their own fate.

✓ The decree which announced this resolution (30th May, 1806) was couched in harsh terms. Napoleon himself, as it appears, gave it the last touches whilst in an angry mood. The first part of the decree ran as follows: "Property claimed for debt by Jewish creditors in certain provinces may not be legally confiscated within the space of a year." The second part ordered the assembly of the Jewish notables. This gathering was so arranged that it should satisfy Bonald. Well-known Jews in the northern districts, who by usury had brought misery upon many peasants, were deprived by the emperor of their rights of equality. He also considered it necessary to exhort all who professed the Jewish religion in France to maintain a feeling of social morality in the cities, which, owing



to their humiliating condition, had become almost extinct amongst them. For these purposes Jewish notables were to express their wishes and suggest means whereby skilled work and useful occupations should become general among the Jews. Thus, for a time at least, a portion of the Jews of France were deprived of their rights of equality. But a recompense was expected from the Assembly of notables for the wounds inflicted by Napoleon. The Prefects were required to select prominent persons from among the Rabbis and laity, who, on a fixed day, should present themselves "in the good city of Paris." Not only the congregations of the old French provinces, but also those in the new ones in the district on the left bank of the Rhine, were to be represented by deputies. Italian Jews, who applied for permission to take part in this meeting, were likewise admitted.

Although the selection of notables was left to the magistrates and was subject to their own discretion, yet on the whole, they were fortunate in their choices. Among more than one hundred notables, who spoke French, German and Italian, the majority were fully aware of the magnitude and importance of their task. They had to defend established Judaism, and before a bar where accusations had been levelled against it, before the eyes of all Europe—a difficult but grateful task. Among them were men who had already gained fame, such as Berr Isaac Berr, his promising son, Michael Berr (who had issued a summons to all princes and nations, asking them to release the Jews from bondage), and also Abraham Furtado formerly a partizan of the Girondists, who had suffered for his political opinions, and was a man of noble mind and of great foresight. His descent has an interesting history. His parents were Marranos in Portugal, but in spite of the enticements of the Church during two hundred years, his mother

had not forgotten her origin and her attachment to Judaism. When the terrible earthquake at Lisbon made everything a heap of ruins, Furtado's parents were overwhelmed by their falling house—his father killed, but his mother, by some fortunate circumstance, entombed in a living grave. She vowed that if God would save her from this danger, she would, in spite of all difficulties, again openly embrace Judaism. A fresh shock of the earthquake opened her tomb amongst the ruins. She then succeeded in escaping from this place of horror, made her way to London, and there publicly returned to Judaism. Here her son Abraham was born, whom she brought up as a Jew. Abraham Furtado was well acquainted with Jewish literature; he collected materials for a Jewish history, and paid particular attention to the Book of Job; but his Jewish knowledge was mere dilettantism without any solidity in it. His favourite study was natural science. Before the Revolution, Furtado belonged to the Commission appointed to make proposals for ameliorating the condition of the French Jews. During the Reign of Terror, and as a supporter of the Girondists, his life was endangered and his property confiscated. By assiduous industry he greatly improved his position, and was able to purchase an estate in Bordeaux. Next to the elder and younger Berrs, Furtado was the brightest ornament of the Assembly; he was an eloquent speaker, and possessed great tact in public affairs.

Another happy choice was the selection of the Rabbi Joseph David Sinzheim, of Strasburg (born 1745, died 1812). He was a man who resembled the Patriarchs in his mode of life, being of the deepest moral earnestness, and of a most lovable, gentle nature. Well furnished with means and the brother-in-law of the wealthy Cerf Berr, Sinzheim devoted himself to the study of the Talmud, not from any mercenary purpose, but from inclination.

His acquaintance with Talmudical and Rabbinical literature was astounding, but he was lacking in depth of understanding. He became acquainted with few other branches of science in the course of his education, but at least he had no antipathy to them. During the Reign of Terror, which caused the Jews in Jew-hating Strasburg to suffer severely, he was compelled to flee for safety, and could not return until peace was restored. The number of the Jews in Strasburg had meanwhile increased under the Directory and Napoleon. They formed themselves into a congregation, appointing Sinzheim as their first Rabbi. Whilst living here he was summoned to Paris to attend the Assembly of Notables, and become the leader of the orthodox party. Besides Sinzheim, only one other Rabbi was elected, the Portuguese Rabbi Abraham Andrade, from Saint-Esprit; the majority of members consisted of laymen.

With trembling hearts about a hundred Jewish Notables from the French and German Departments now assembled. They had no fixed plan, as they did not know precisely what were the emperor's intentions. A summons from the minister, addressed to each member singly (23rd July, 1806), gave them only a faint idea of what was coming. They learnt that in three days' time, on a Sabbath, they were to hold a meeting in a hall of the Hotel de Ville, set apart for them. There the Assembly was to be formally opened, and they were to answer the questions which the Imperial Commissioners would lay before them. Their firm hope was that the Jews would become useful citizens; that they might bring their religious belief into agreement with their duties as Frenchmen; that they should refute the charges made against them, and remedy the evils which they had occasioned. The selection of Imperial Commissioners by Molé, in the persons of Portalis and Pasquier, who should treat officially



with the Assembly, was not calculated to quiet their fears. These two men had formerly served as mediums for the spread of anti-Jewish slanders of Bonald and others. On the day previous to that of opening the Assembly (25th July), there appeared in the official journal, the "Moniteur," an account of the history of the Jews since their return from Babylon till that time. The French nation was thus made acquainted with the importance of the questions now to be submitted to the Jews themselves. In rapid sequence the following circumstances were depicted:—The former independence and its subsequent loss by the Jewish people, their victories and defeats; their persecutions during the Middle Ages and the protection they afterwards found; their wide-spread increase and massacres; the accusations directed against them; the abasement and oppression beneath which they had suffered in different countries at the hands of succeeding monarchs, and through fluctuating opinions and policies. Jewish history thus received, so to speak, an official seal. That there were many false statements and errors in this account was not to be wondered at. At the command of the emperor, the Jewish religion, or Judaism, was officially expounded, with an even greater display of ignorance. Two points were particularly emphasized, viz., that the religious and moral separation of the Jews from the rest of the world, and the pursuit of usury to the injury of members of other creeds, if not prescribed, was at any rate tolerated by the Jewish law. "How otherwise is the fact to be explained," it was remarked at the conclusion of the official document, "that those Jews who at the present time extort high rates of interest, are considered as most religious and as following the laws of the Talmud most faithfully?" The inference thus drawn sounds both untrue and, at the same time, slightly possible. "Do we not see that the Portuguese

Jews, who have no dealings with usury, are less strict in their adherence to the Talmud? Had the distinguished Jews in Germany, such as their famous Mendelssohn, any great reverence for the Rabbis? Finally, are those men among us who devote themselves to the sciences, orthodox Jews?" Thus Talmudical Judaism was once again represented as being a stumbling-block in the way of the progress of the Jews, not, indeed, in that spirit of hatred which characterised it in Germany; but it was laid open to attack, and that too before a public or even a European tribunal.

On the same day that the Jews commenced their discussions in Paris, the deputies assembled in order to decide upon a question of conscience. The official meeting was to be held on Saturday, and their first business consisted in the election of a President and of Secretaries by means of written votes. Thereupon the representatives of the French, German, and Italian Jews came together and proceeded to discuss the infringements and neglect of Jewish laws, caused during the last half century by changes in the times, and all were more or less agreed, from the politician Furtado, to the Rabbis who had spent all their lives in schools. They were expected to come to a unanimous decision. At first they could not understand each other, but had to employ German and Italian interpreters. Should the first public act of the Jewish deputies commence with the desecration of the Sabbath? Or should they strictly adhere to the religious prohibition, and thus give a handle to enemies of the Jews, who asserted that Judaism was incompatible with the exercise of civil functions? These serious questions occupied the minds of members with the deepest interest. The Rabbis and the party of Berr Isaac Berr were of opinion that the first sitting should be postponed to another day, or at least that no election should take place. The less

critical party, the politicians, urged on the contrary that they should impress upon the emperor that Judaism could subordinate itself to political laws; and the debate grew very violent.

Thus the first Jewish Parliament in Paris assembled on a Sabbath, in a hall of the State House, decorated with appropriate emblems. The deputies attended in full force, none were absent; some of them intentionally came in carriages. Some of the stricter members again tried to have the first meeting postponed, but in vain. The dread of Napoleon's authoritative command terrified those who were not so particular with regard to religious ordinances. Under the chairmanship of Rabbi Solomon Lipmann, who, as being the eldest, was chosen President, the election now proceeded. The orthodox members had already provided themselves with ballot tickets, but most of the others wrote them out unabashed before the very eyes of the Rabbis, whilst a few had theirs written for them. The choice of President was limited to one of two men, Berr Isaac Berr and Furtado. The former was supported by the orthodox party, and the latter by the politicians. Furtado obtained the majority of votes. With parliamentary tact he assumed the leadership of the Assembly. The deputies now showed that they were fully conscious of the grave responsibility resting upon them, and addressed themselves to their task. All were animated by a strong desire for unanimity.

Even the German Rabbis who hitherto had been buried in the seclusion of the Academy amidst the volumes of the Talmud quickly adapted themselves to the new circumstances and to the parliamentary methods of procedure. Certain deputies contributed to impress all present with a feeling of concord. The speech of the deputy Lipmann Cerf Berr,



had a remarkable effect, especially the following words :—

“ Let us forget our origin ! Let us no longer speak of Jews of Alsace, of Portugal, or of Germany. Though scattered over the face of the globe, we are still one people, worshipping the same God, and as our Law commands us, we are to obey the laws of the country where we live.”

When the officer of the guard of honour which had been furnished for the meeting approached the newly-elected President to receive his orders, and when at the departure of the deputies, the guard greeted them with military honours and beat of drums, they felt themselves exalted, and their fear was turned to hope.

This joyful expectation revived their courage and enabled them to oppose the attacks of Jew-hating writers. In the meantime the whole body of deputies from the kingdom of Italy arrived and created a favourable impression by their attitude. Amongst them were traces of the spirit of the age which manifested itself in difference of religious views and opinions, although this was not so sharply marked as among the French and German Jews.

The most distinguished among the Jewish Italian deputies was Abraham Vita di Bologna (born 1755, died in Trieste, 1832). He was well versed both in Rabbinical and scientific learning, of a prepossessing appearance, and an elegant speaker. He was elected Rabbi of Mantua in the Parliament of the Italian kingdom. His Talmudical and secular knowledge, however, was neither comprehensive nor deep. Bologna was in favour of the new tendency, which removed Judaism from its isolated position in order to imbue it with European ideas, and to give it a definite standing ; but both the means and end were not clearly defined in his mind, and he took no steps to carry out his wishes. An elder member of the Italian Notables, Joshua Benzion

Segre (born about 1720, died 1809), who was at the same time the owner of an estate, a Rabbi and a Municipal Councillor of Vercelli, was also in favour of scientific studies, and belonged to the advanced party. The follies of the Kabbala still found many supporters among the educated Italian Jews, although its first opponents had come from Italy. Benzion Segre himself was averse to the study. On the other hand, the Italian deputy Graziadio (Chanannel) Nepi, a Rabbi and physician in Cinto (born 1760, died 1836), was a firm believer in it. He was exceedingly well read in Jewish literature, and had compiled an alphabetical register of the names of Jewish authors of ancient and modern times. He had not swerved a hairbreadth from Rabbinical Judaism from fear of the Kabbalistic tendency, which in his mind affected everything in the order of the universe from the lowest to the highest degree.

12 At the second sitting (29th July), the three Imperial Commissioners solemnly propounded twelve questions, to which the Assembly were to offer definite answers. The chief points were, whether the French Jews regarded France as their Fatherland, Frenchmen as their brothers, the laws of the State as binding upon them, all of which were deduced from the incisive third question, "Can Jews legally intermarry with Christians," and, lastly, whether usury to non-Jews is permitted or forbidden. The remaining points referred to polygamy, divorce, and the authority and conditions of the Rabbis, and were of a subordinate nature. Most of the members could not listen to these queries without a feeling of pain that the love of their country and their attachment to France should thus be called into question, notwithstanding that Jews had attested their patriotism by shedding their blood upon battle-fields. From many sides rose a cry at these questions, "Aye, to the death." The address

that Molé delivered when submitting these twelve questions was cold and to some extent offensive. Its contents were nearly as follows:—The charges that had been brought against various Jews had been proved. The emperor was, nevertheless, not satisfied to check the evil himself, but desired the assistance of the deputies. They were to state the whole truth in replying to the questions laid before them. The emperor permitted full liberty of discussion; but wished them to bear in mind that they were Frenchmen, and they would be unworthy of that honour unless they acted in accordance with it. The Assembly therefore knew what was expected of them. They were now brought face to face with the alternative between renouncing their rights of equality or of damaging Judaism.

Furtado, in his reply to the speech of the Commissioner, very cleverly endeavoured to turn the mistrust of the emperor into a semblance of trust by showing that the best opportunity was now given to the Jews in answering these questions, to lay bare all errors and put an end to the prejudices entertained against them. The speech which Berr Isaac Berr delivered at this meeting was more sincere, more manly, and altogether more fervent. Furtado represented the Jews, but not Judaism; he caused it to be understood that the Assembly should consider it their duty to obey every hint of the emperor. Berr, on the contrary, laid more stress upon Judaism, and expressed himself in a more dignified manner. The duty of replying to the questions was assigned to a Commission, which included, besides the President, the Secretary, and the auditors, the four most eminent Rabbis, Sinzheim, Andrade, de Cologna and Segre, and the two most learned laymen.

This Commission handed over the chief part of their work to the Rabbi, David Sinzheim, the most scholarly and esteemed member of the Assembly,



who, in a very short time, completed his task to the satisfaction of the Commissioners, and finally to that of the emperor (30th July till 3rd August). The result of his labours was first submitted to the Commissioners, who reported them to the emperor before even they were brought up for public discussion. Napoleon was so pleased at the behaviour of the Assembly that he announced his intention to grant an audience to all the members. Their parliamentary tact, as shown to himself in their dealings, especially filled him with a feeling of such high regard towards them that he partially overcame his prejudices against the Jews. He had always pictured them as ragmen and usurers, with cringing, bent forms, or as sly cunning flatterers who lay in ambush for their prey; and to his astonishment he beheld among the members men of good and unsullied reputation, and of intelligent and imposing appearance. He thus acquired a better opinion of the Jews. Moreover, the incense offered as to a deity, with which the Assembly met him, created a great impression upon his mind. The serious task placed before the Jewish deputies also made them greater, exalted them above the common level, and elevated them. Their combined efforts had awakened an active spirit in their midst, and roused by the orations that were delivered around them, even the sober German members became infected with similar feelings.

At the third sitting (4th August), when a debate upon the replies to the various questions was to be held, the deputies were already filled with self-confidence and a certainty of victory. No difficulty was offered by the first two questions—whether polygamy was allowed among the Jews, and whether a divorce granted by the French law was also acknowledged by their religious and moral code. These were decided according to the desire of the emperor without any injury to Judaism. But the

third question aroused a painful excitement, and re-opened the opposition which had agitated men's minds since the time of Mendelssohn—"May a Jewess marry a Christian, or a Christian woman a Jew?" This question had already given rise to heated debates within the limits of the Commission, how much more so then in public Assembly. But even the orthodox party felt that it was a critical question as to whether they should reply unconditionally in the negative. The Commission, however, had already supplied a clever answer, mainly owing to Sinzheim's efforts, and which redounded to his intellect and tact. At the outset it was skilfully explained that, according to the view of the Bible, only marriages with Canaanite nations were forbidden. Even according to the Talmud, inter-marriages were allowed because the nations of Europe were not considered as idolaters. The Rabbis, however, were opposed to such unions, seeing that the necessary ceremonies could not be performed in the usual way, as the Catholic priests refused their assistance on such occasions. This refusal, nevertheless, was of little consequence, because civil marriages were recognised by the State. The Rabbis considered a Jew or Jewess who had contracted a union of this kind as a full co-religionist.

The remaining questions were settled without any opposition in two sittings (7th and 12th August). The question as to whether the Jews regarded Frenchmen as their brothers, and France as their Fatherland, was answered by the Assembly with a loud, enthusiastic affirmative. They were able to call to their aid the doctrines of Judaism, which in its three phases—Biblical, Talmudical and Rabbinical—had always placed foremost a love of man and a feeling of brotherhood. Only one point in the project of the Commission gave rise to a certain amount of friction, viz., that which seemed

to ascribe a kind of superiority to the Portuguese Jews, as if through their conduct these were held in higher esteem by Christians than the German Jews. This clause was thereupon struck out.

In answering the two questions relative to usury, the Assembly were able to demolish a deeply-rooted prejudice and to place Judaism in a favourable light.

The Commissioner Molé, who had first stirred up feelings of Jew-hatred and antipathy to this people, and who proposed to exclude them from all public offices, had now publicly to declare (18th September) that the emperor was satisfied with the views and zeal of the Assembly. His speech on this occasion struck quite a different note to the former one. "Who indeed," he exclaimed, "would not be astonished at the sight of this assembly of enlightened men, selected from among the descendants of the most ancient of nations? If any individual of the past centuries could again come to life and if this scene met his gaze, would he not think himself transplanted within the walls of the Holy City? or might he not imagine that a thorough revolution in the affairs of man had taken place?" "His Majesty," continued Molé, "guarantees to you the free practice of your religion and the full enjoyment of your political rights; but in exchange for these valuable privileges, he demands a religious surety that you will completely realise the principles expressed in your answers."

What could the surety be? Napoleon then caused to be announced a surprising message, which filled the Assembly with joyful astonishment and electrified them. "The emperor proposes to call together the great Synhedrion!" This part of their national government, which had perished together with the Temple, and which alone had been endowed with authority in Israel, was now to be revived for the purpose of recording the



answers of the Assembly as decisions which they should carry into effect, and which should command the highest respect, equally with the words of the Talmud, in the eyes of Jews of all countries and throughout all centuries. Further, the Assembly was to make known the meeting of the great Synhedrion to all the synagogues in Europe, so that they should send to Paris deputies capable of administering the new government with intelligence, and worthy of belonging to this Assembly. In order that the newly-revived Synhedrion should possess an honourable and imposing character, worthy of its predecessors in history, it was to be constituted on the pattern of the former one; it was to consist of seventy-one members, and to have a President (Nasi), a Vice-President (Ab-Bet-Din), and a second Vice-President (Chacham). This announcement filled the deputies with courage as if the ancient glory of Israel had suddenly risen from the tomb and once more assumed a solid shape. Three months previously they had been summoned for the purpose of rescuing their civil rights which were endangered, and now a new vista opened before them, and they seemed to behold their glorious past revived in the present and assist in the accomplishment of this dream; and they were filled with amazement.

Naturally, after the receipt of this announcement, the Assembly proceeded to pass enthusiastic motions and votes of thanks. They expressed their approval of everything which the Commissioners had proposed or had only intimated. The Synhedrion was to be composed of two-thirds Rabbis and of one-third laymen, and was to include all the Rabbis in the Assembly of Notables, together with others to be afterwards elected. The true importance of the Assembly now came to be recognised; hitherto it had only played an assumed part. The proclamation issued to the whole Jewish world (24th

Tishri—6th October) was a momentous one. It aimed at rousing the Jews to take an interest in the approaching meeting of the Synhedrion, and to induce them to send deputies. This proclamation was written in four languages, Hebrew, French, German and Italian, and expressed the feelings which animated members of the Assembly, and the hopes that were entertained for the great Synhedrion :

“A great event is about to take place, one which through a long series of centuries our fathers, and even we in our own times never expected to see, and which has now appeared before the eyes of the astonished world. The 20th of October has been fixed as the date for the opening of a Great Synhedrion in the capital of one of the most powerful Christian nations, and under the protection of the great Prince who rules over it. Paris will thus show to the world a remarkable scene, and this ever-memorable event will open to the dispersed remnants of the descendants of Abraham a period of deliverance and prosperity.”

The Jewish Parliament, and the re-establishment of a Synhedrion created a great divergence of opinion throughout Europe. The world was accustomed to Napoleon's feats of war and brilliant victories; the power of his arms was a subject of daily wonder, so that men ceased to be astonished at it. But that this wonderful and terrible hero should turn his attention to the most ancient people, to raise them and restore them to some of their lost splendour, caused, perhaps, more general surprise among Christians than among the Jews. This incident was looked upon as a miraculous event, as some new era in the history of the world, which might lead to a different state of things. Some Christian writers in Bamberg, at the head of whom was a Catholic priest (Gley), expected such great and important results from the Jewish Assembly in Paris that they established a special newspaper, a kind of journal for the Jews. Only the distinguished men in Berlin—the circle of David Friedländer—experienced an uncomfortable sensation at

the news, because they feared that, through the Synhedrion in France, ancient Judaism would be revived and clothed in a new spirit. They therefore declared the Synhedrion to be a juggling trick, provided by Napoleon for his Parisians. Patriotism was also involved in this sense of uneasiness, for the Prussian Jews had participated in the deep grief into which the people of Prussia and the royal family had been plunged by the defeats at Jena and Auerstadt (14th October, 1806).

Four days after the dissolution of the Assembly of Notables (9th Adar, 9th February, 1807), the Great Synhedrion assembled. This Assembly had assumed a new character. It consisted, as already mentioned, for the greater part of Rabbis, most of whom had already been in the Assembly of Notables. Twenty-five laymen from the same Assembly were added, and the whole body proceeded to ratify the answers to the twelve questions according to the wishes of Napoleon. To all appearances the great Synhedrion were to assemble and transact business according to their own pleasure. The Commissioners were not to have any communications with them. The Minister of the Interior only chose the first three officials: Sinzheim as President (Nasi), the greyheaded Segre as first Vice-President (Ab-Bet-Din), and Abraham di Cologne as second Vice-President (Chacham).

After attending the synagogue, the Assembly made its way to the Mansion House, and there the seventy members, in a hall specially decorated for them, took their seats in rank of seniority, being arranged in a semi-circle according to ancient custom, around the President. The sittings were open to the public, and many spectators were present at them. The members of the Synhedrion were suitably attired in black garments, with silken scarves, and three-cornered hats upon their heads. The meeting was opened by a prayer,



specially composed by Sinzheim. The speeches of Sinzheim and Furtado, with which the first meeting commenced, were appropriate to the occasion.

The second sitting (12th February) was occupied by the reading of the motions which the Synhedrion were to sanction, together with the presentation of addresses from different congregations in France, Italy, and the Rhineland, and especially in Dresden and Niemen, expressing their agreement with the Assembly, and a letter of greeting to the Synhedrion from Amsterdam.

The Synhedrion now felt itself at a loss for want of subjects to discuss. The matters which they had proposed to settle were left untouched, owing to new circumstances which had arisen. The Franco-Prussian war had caused the emperor to be forgetful of the Synhedrion and the Jews in general. There only remained one act for the members of the Synhedrion to perform, which was to convert the replies of the previous Assembly into definite and inviolable laws. The question as to the power of the new Synhedrion to impose binding laws, or whether it could be placed on the same basis as the ancient one, was not even mooted. The Rabbis overcame this scruple by voting that it was permitted by the Talmud for each generation to institute suitable ordinances and make new decisions, and therefore, without further discussion, they declared themselves as constituted. Without demur, the Synhedrion adopted the incisive view expressed by Furtado, that Judaism consisted of two strikingly distinct elements—the purely religious and the political-legislative. The first-mentioned are unalterable; the latter, on the other hand, which have lost their significance since the downfall of the Jewish State, can be set aside by others. The inferences to be drawn from this difference could not be carried into application by any individual

person, but only by an authorised assembly, a great Synhedrion, which owing to the unfavourable aspect of the times had never hitherto been able to assemble. The Synhedrion was, therefore, no innovation. The following highly important paragraph with reference to marriage was also passed without opposition: That not only must the civil marriage precede the religious ceremony, but that intermarriages between Jews and Christians were to be considered binding, and although they were not attended by any religious forms, yet no religious interdict could therefore be passed upon them. In this evasive manner the Synhedrion satisfied both its own conscience and the suspicions of the Imperial officers.

As the Synhedrion had no actual business to transact, the time of the sittings was filled up in speeches delivered by Hildesheimer, the deputy from Frankfurt, Asser the deputy from Amsterdam, and finally by Sinzheim, who made the closing speech. The new decisions of the Synhedrion, drawn up in French and Hebrew, enacted the following: That it is prohibited for any Jew to marry more than one wife; that divorce by the Jewish law was only effective when allowed by the civil authorities; and that persons contracting a marriage must receive a similar permission. That every Israelite was religiously bound to consider his non-Jewish neighbours, who also recognise and worship God as the Creator, on the same footing as brothers and co-religionists; that he should love his fatherland, defend it, and readily undertake military service if called upon to do so; that Judaism did not forbid any kind of handicraft and occupation, and that, therefore, it was commendable for Israelites to engage in agriculture, handicrafts, and the arts, and to forsake trading; and finally, that it was forbidden to Israelites to exact usury either from Jew or Christian.

These new laws of the Synhedrion were of very

limited scope. The Synhedrion only had in view the immediate present, and did not look into the distant future. The Jews in general were not satisfied with their action and its results. An English Jew, in a letter addressed to the members, in fact, boldly reproached them for having disowned, not alone Judaism, but all revealed religion.

“Has any one of our brethren in Constantinople, Aleppo, Bagdad, Corfu, or from our English communities been sent as a deputy to you, or have they recorded their approval of your decisions?”

The French Government, however, had now obtained the surety demanded from the Jews, which had been stipulated before the rights of citizenship could be legally recognised anew. At the proposition of the Commissioners the Synhedrion dissolved, and their decisions were submitted to Napoleon, whose attention had been fixed on the Prusso-Russian war, until owing to the decisive battle in Prussian Friedland, the false peace at Tilsit was concluded. During Napoleon's absence, plans were secretly laid with the purpose of restricting the power of the French Jews. The Jewish deputies however, discovered this, and the indefatigable Furtado, together with Maurice Levy of Nancy, hastened from the Seine to Niemen to acquaint the emperor with the agitation against the Jews; but he nevertheless remained prepossessed in favour of Judaism.

After the dissolution of the Synhedrion the Assembly of Notables again met, in order to take common action with the magistrates of the town and officially to present their report (March 25th—April 6th, 1807).

After an interval of a year, Napoleon announced to the Jews his intentions with reference to the legislation to be enacted on their behalf. He expressed (March 17th, 1808) his approval of the organisation of the Consistory, which degraded the officials of the synagogue to the level of police-



men and regulated the civil position of the Jews, or rather imposed restrictions on their hitherto favourable condition, although he published the comforting assurance that their equalisation would suffer no restrictions. He had already deceived all the world and everywhere trodden freedom under foot, and how could he be expected to keep his word with the Jews and to leave their freedom unmolested? The law appeared to be conceived in such a manner as to imply that the Jew-hating Molé had framed it. It contained no word about the equalisation of the Jews. No French Jew henceforth was to engage in any species of trade without having obtained the permission of the Prefect, and his consent was only to be granted on the testimony of the State magistrates and the Consistory as to the good character of the applicant. Contracts of Jews who could not show a patent were to be annulled. The taking of pledges as security for a loan was also surrounded by limitations which savoured of the Middle Ages. Further, no foreign Jew was to settle in the German departments, nor any from those departments in another district. Finally, the Jewish people were not allowed to procure substitutes for military service; each Jew who was chosen as a soldier had to enter the ranks. These restrictive laws were to remain in force for ten years, "in the hope that by the end of that period, and by the action of various regulations, no difference whatever would exist between the Jews and other citizens of the State."

Thus the Jews of France, who had been regarded as the anchor of hope by their brethren in other countries, were once again humiliated and placed under exceptional legislation. The law also enacted that the Jews of Bordeaux and certain other departments who had given no cause for complaint should not be included under these new restrictions. Shortly afterwards, owing to their loud complaints,

exceptions were made in favour of the Jews of Paris, Livorno, the department of the Lower Pyrenees, and of fifteen other districts in France and Italy, so that really only the scapegoats, the German-speaking Jews in France, were deprived of their full civil privileges. But nevertheless the odious stain, which had been again fastened to the Jews, adhered to those of the race who had been emancipated. Their opponents, who had zealously striven to check the elevation of the Jews, could now point to France and urge that the race was indeed incapable of amendment, seeing that the sons of the very men who had been emancipated long since, were obliged to be deprived of their rights of equality.

Meanwhile the arm of Napoleon, powerful though it was, could not stem the flood once set in motion, a desire for the liberation of oppressed nationalities and classes. By his own spirit and impetuosity he had increased the necessity for this end. After the subjection of Prussia, Napoleon called into existence, chiefly at the expense of this State, two new political creations, the one being called the duchy of Warsaw (in order to avoid the dangerous and magical title of the kingdom of Poland). This country was placed under the rule of the Electoral Prince of Saxony, and the kingdom of Westphalia under that of Napoleon's brother, Jerome (Hieronymus).

In the new German kingdom, which was formed from the conjoint territories of several princes, the Jews energetically demanded their freedom and equalisation. Napoleon had framed the Constitution of the new kingdom, with the assistance of the statesmen Beugnot, Johannes von Müller, and also of Dohm, who being friends of the Jews, had included their equalisation in the original plan. Jerome, more just and generous than his brother, issued an edict (Jan. 12th, 1808) declaring all Jews of his State without exception to be full citizens, he abolished Jew-taxes of every description, and allowed

foreign Jews to reside in the country under the same protection as that afforded to Christian immigrants; he further threatened with punishment any malicious persons who should derisively call the Jewish citizens of his State "protection Jews." Michael Berr, the brave and pious defender of Judaism, was summoned from France to accept office in the kingdom of Westphalia. Jews and Christians alike were filled with hopes at this promotion among their co-religionists. The Jew-hating German University of Göttingen elected Berr as a member.

An important part was played at the new Court in Cassel by Israel Jacobson (born at Halberstadt, 1769; died at Berlin, 1828), who had formerly been Chancellor of the Exchequer at the Court of Brunswick. Although he was concerned in modern Jewish history, and was even regarded as a German Furtado, yet he only bore an external resemblance to this earnest Jewish patriot. The similarity lay in the fact that Jacobson possessed an extraordinary flow of language and great vigour in carrying out his projects, which talents he employed for ameliorating the position of his co-religionists. His wealth provided him with the means of realizing all the schemes which his active brain invented, or at least he endeavoured to realise them. Noble-minded, good-natured, ready for any sacrifice and energetic, he kept one aim before him, the removal of a hateful and repulsive exterior from the Jews and Judaism, and the endeavour to render them externally more attractive and brilliant.

In order to commemorate the day of the emancipation of the Jews, Jacobson caused a gold medal to be struck with the emblem of the union of the hitherto antagonistic beliefs, and a Latin inscription which ran thus: "To God and the fatherly king, united in the kingdom of Westphalia." Instigated by Jacobson, the Jews of the kingdom of Westphalia determined to form an organisation similar to that



of their brethren in France. Twenty-two Notables were summoned to Cassel, among whom the originator of the movement was naturally included. Jerome received them kindly, and spoke some memorable words on the occasion, stating that he was pleased to find that the Constitution of his kingdom, although it had been forced upon him, yet confirmed the equality of all creeds, and entirely corresponded with his own ideas. In the Commission appointed to draw up the plan for a Jewish Consistory in the kingdom of Westphalia, Jacobson was naturally elected to the Presidentship. Michael Berr was also a member. The composition of the Consistory on the model of the French one was confirmed as such at about the same time (March 3rd, 1808). In France a Rabbi occupied the chief position, whilst in the German Assembly Jacobson was to be President. He also desired to become a Rabbi, and even represented himself as one. The chief meeting-place of the Westphalian Consistory was in Cassel. The importance of this place was everywhere acknowledged; Jacobson was especially powerful, and was only obliged to seek the aid of the magistrates upon important occasions. The Consistory was also to be employed as a means of rousing patriotic feelings in the hearts of both old and young on behalf of the House of Bonaparte. It was especially to busy itself with the debts of various congregations, which debts were to be divided among the several communities, and thus paid off easily.

Strange to say, one of the members of the Consistory was a Christian. This was the State Councillor Merkel, who acting as secretary, kept a watch upon the steps of the highest Jewish judicial authorities like a detective. In the French Central Consistory thoughtful and trusty men who had already given proofs of their abilities were elected, such as David Sinzheim the President, Abraham di

Cologne and Menahem Deutz, whose son afterwards obtained a sad celebrity. These men knew how to bridge over the gap between the old times and the new; Jacobson on the other hand delighted in foolhardy leaps, and dragged his colleagues along with him. In his plan of transforming the condition of the congregations and the synagogues under his jurisdiction, he called to his assistance David Friedländer, now almost within the pale of Christianity, and also the school of the Measim. The desire of Jacobson was for reform, or rather for the introduction of such practices into the Jewish Divine service as were observed in the Christian Churches, especially with regard to ceremonials.

The first German prince who voluntarily conceded to the Jews at least a restricted amount of freedom was Duke Charles of Baden, one of the dependents of the family of Napoleon. Baden being on the borders of France became accustomed to the recognition of the Jews of that country as citizens; and public opinion was more favourable towards them there than in other parts of Germany. But the German Prince of Baden was not altogether as free from prejudice as the members of the Napoleon family who occupied German thrones. He permitted the Jews to become citizens by right of inheritance, but did not allow them to dwell in such towns as had hitherto been closed to all Jews; and even in their inherited possessions they were only to be regarded as "protected citizens." The duke, however, promised that those who ceased to engage in the so-called necessary trade should be entitled to style themselves full citizens and should reside wherever they pleased. Their religious peculiarities were to be respected, "only in as far as they agreed with the Mosaic Law, but not with the Talmudical interpretations of the same."

Even the city of Frankfort for the moment succumbed to the pretence of giving equality, although

an obstinate and petty spite against the Jews raged in the breast of every patrician. This hatred had greatly increased in intensity since an attempt at Revolution had been made. It was resolved that the enslaved condition of the Jews should indemnify them for their loss of independent government, and not a single badge or ceremony which kept alive the thoughts of Jewish degradation was removed from the Jews, who numbered about five hundred families. The laws of "Stättigkeit," *i.e.*, defining their status as serfs, which had existed for two hundred years, were still annually read in the synagogue. Every newly admitted Jew was compelled to take an oath of obedience to the Senate. Restrictions as to the marriages of Jews still remained in force. Jew-taxes had to be paid, as if the Holy Roman Emperor of the German nation, and not the all-powerful will of the Corsican still held sway which crushed both emperors and kings. The Jews were obliged to dwell in the narrow, dirty, unhealthy Jewish quarter, and every Christian, however degraded, had the right of calling to the Jew, although more civilised than himself, "Behave yourself decently, Jew!" of treating him like some despicable object and even of driving him away from the better parts of the city and from the pathways.

The French general Jordan had indeed freed the Frankfort Jews from the Ghetto for a few years, after bombarding the city and destroying that portion of it. Under the eyes of the French victors the patricians, although against their will, were compelled to allow the Jews to reside in other districts of the town, where they might purchase houses, but could not erect them. When the Holy German and Roman Empire melted away like a snowflake before the breath of Napoleon, Frankfort fell under the sovereignty of the Arch-Chancellor or Chief Prince of the League of the Rhine. The powerful functionaries themselves became subject, and



amongst the Jews the conditions of bondage came to an end without any legal operations being employed to effect this change. Karl von Dalberg, a liberal-minded man, and most favourably impressed on behalf of the Jews, would gladly have removed their yoke, indeed he wrote to Gregoire, the advocate of emancipation, upon this subject. He however was too fully aware of the stubborn hatred of the patricians of Frankfort towards the Jews, to imagine that he could procure their emancipation after one attempt. He had only promised in a general way at the so-called coronation that the members of the Jewish nation should be protected against injury and insulting treatment. The urgent necessity of regulating the status of the Jews by law, was apparent to this Prince-Primate, who discharged his duty only by half measures, having been always accustomed to haphazard proceedings. By the publication of a new order for the government and protection of the Jews, he showed his partial agreement with the new tendencies, as also by his decree that "previous laws opposed to the spirit of the age according to the modern standpoint of the Jewish nation" should be abrogated. He at the same time appeased the anti-Jewish party by stating "that complete equality would not be granted so long as the Jews did not show themselves worthy of it, by forsaking their peculiarities and by adopting the customs of the country." By these new ordinances they were treated as strangers on sufferance, to whom the rights of a nation and of individuals might be conceded, but not those of citizens. The various protection-taxes were however comprised under an annual impost of 22,000 florins. Even the Ghetto was again designated as their residence; they were cautioned not to renew their leases in the town with Christian landlords, because the day would soon dawn when they would have to return to their prison.

Naturally the Jews of Frankfort used their utmost endeavours to amend these objectionable exceptions, and to be placed on an equal footing with their neighbouring co-religionists in the kingdom of Westphalia. When the League of the Rhine was dissolved and the Duchy of Frankfort was created with a Constitution of its own, and the equality of all inhabitants, of whatever belief, was recognised by law, Amschel and Gumprecht, and also Rothschild (the first Court-agent who took the oath of loyalty to the princes), as representatives of the Jews, did not rest until they had induced the Archduke Dalberg and his Council to establish their equalisation by a special law and in spite of all opposition. The new Archduke being in want of funds, and also desiring the freedom and equality of the Jews, consented to grant these privileges for the sum of 440,000 florins (being twenty times the amount of the annual tax of 22,000 florins), to be paid in instalments of 50,000 florins, and the remainder in annual payments of 10,000 florins. The law (published December 28th, 1811), decreed, "that all Jews living in Frankfort under protection, together with their children and descendants, should enjoy civil rights and privileges equally with other citizens." The Jews took the oath of citizenship, entered upon their duties, and Louis Baruch (Börne), though a Jew, was allowed to enlist in the Ducal police. The Jew-streets, or such of them as remained, lost their mournful privileges and were swept out of existence or joined to the adjacent thoroughfares. The proud patriots gnashed their teeth at such unheard-of innovations. They had suffered a double loss by the loosening of the bonds of serfdom and the consolidation of the Jewish inhabitants; but for the time they had to acquiesce.

The North Hanse Towns, where the German spirit of the guilds joined to ossified Lutheranism

scarcely allowed the Jews to breathe, were compelled by order of the French garrison to grant them equality. Hamburg agreed to place all its inhabitants, including Jews, upon an equal level (1811), and also admitted them to seats in the Civic Council. The following testimony was afterwards adduced in their favour:—

“That with all the privileges of equality which they had received, or had guaranteed to them, their much-feared presumption did not obtrude itself, nor had any disadvantages accrued to the Christian citizens; on the contrary, the Jews displayed a quiet, modest, and friendly demeanour in spite of additional prerogatives, and showed eagerness to work for the public weal. Several gained distinction by their great benevolence and patriotism.”

The small town of Lübeck showed more indignation at the settlement and emancipation of the few Jews in its midst under French protection. Hitherto only about ten families were tolerated in the town as “protection Jews,” who were forbidden either to engage in trade, to join the guilds, or to obtain possession of houses. These privileges were regarded as exclusively Christian; no Jews dared to claim them. Only three Jews were allowed to come daily into Lübeck from the neighbouring small town of Moisling (which was under the dominion of Denmark or Holstein), and these were compelled to pay a sort of poll-tax at the gate. Every messenger of a petty trader could lay hands upon them and take them before the police if they sold goods, and everything found in the possession of such suspects was confiscated. With the advent of the French Government (1811-1814), about forty-two independent Jews from Moisling and fourteen foreigners were added to those in Lübeck, thus bringing the number of families in Lübeck up to sixty-six. These sixty-six Jews aroused the fierce rage of the Lübeck patricians even more than had Napoleon’s conquest. The embargo laid by Napoleon upon the Continent to annoy England had



attracted several hitherto unfriendly Jewish families to North Germany.

In the Hanse Town of Bremen, where until then only travelling Jews had been permitted to pay toll on their entrance to the town, a few took up their residence under French protection, not indeed in great numbers, but yet they were too many for the bigotry of the patricians, as they were allowed equal rights with other citizens. Even the Duke of Mecklenburg, Frederick Franz, granted the equalisation of the Jews (February 22nd, 1812), and allowed marriages between Jews and Christians, though no law as yet passed had conceded so much. Prussia also could no longer resist the tide which flowed almost everywhere in favour of the Jews. In Prussia they had displayed much greater love for their native land and brought more sacrifices during times of trouble than did several of the corrupt nobility, who even made overtures to their victorious enemies. But a long time elapsed before King Frederick William III. could overcome his ingrained repugnance towards them. He abolished the insulting cognomen of "protection Jews," declaring that they were not only admissible to full civil rights, but that these were actually compulsory. They might take the oath as citizens, who were permitted to reside in certain places, and were to share in the burdens of the cities in which they lived. But they were not to be recognised as State citizens, their position being the reverse of that of the Jews in Baden. The prospect of equalisation as State citizens was again held out to them, but the promise remained unfulfilled for several years. When however Hardenburg obtained control over the disturbed affairs of the State, and set about repealing decayed laws and destroying the old condition of affairs, he determined to remove the civil disabilities of the Jews, so that by their help, new strength should be infused into the

mutilated, bleeding, and impoverished territory. In its wretched state of deep depression Prussia certainly needed David Friedländer and his friends, the capitalists of Berlin, who used their utmost efforts to bring about that State equalisation which had so long been promised them. The king however again refused to ratify the law submitted to him for signature by the State Chancellor. At length—moved, it is said, by the interest taken by the Berlin Jews in commemorating the death of the much-suffering and lamented Queen Louise, and in founding the Louise Institute—Frederick William gave his assent (March 11th, 1812) to the equalisation of all Jews who were at that time settled in Prussia. They were to be admitted to posts in academical schools and colleges; but the king withheld the privilege of admission to public State offices. Together with these concessions they were to submit to all duties, and especially to serve as soldiers. Their religious affairs were to be regulated afterwards. “Jews were to exert themselves to carry out the laws referring to culture, especially as they enjoyed public confidence by reason of their knowledge and probity.”

Three German princes alone withstood the impulses of the spirit of the age: those of Bavaria, Austria, and Saxony. The first, Maximilian Joseph, who was appointed King of Bavaria by Napoleon, promulgated an edict (June 10th, 1813), which appeared to concede to the Jews—at least to those who possessed the right of settlement—the privileges of equality. But this privilege was surrounded with many limitations. In cities to which no Jew had hitherto been admitted, their settlement was to depend upon the royal pleasure, and even in those places where they had already dwelt for a long time their numbers were not to be increased, but rather to be diminished. In

Austria, Leopold II. and Francis I., the successors of the Emperor Joseph, who had somewhat loosened the chains of the Jews, refused to allow the favourable intentions of their predecessors to be carried into execution, and imposed new humiliations. In addition to the already unendurable burden of taxes, which lay heavy upon the congregations of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Galicia, under the pretext of a tax upon candles, or wine and meat, a collection-tax was imposed in Vienna, which was a toll upon every Jew who entered the capital. Police spies closely watched the Jew who stayed in Vienna for a short time unprovided with a passport, and even treated him like a criminal. Marriages among Jews were still restricted and only allowed to be contracted by the eldest son of the family, or by one who was able to pay heavy bribes. Although Austria was so often overrun by the soldiers of liberty, yet, impenetrable as the wall of China, it resisted every innovation. In the newly-created kingdom of Saxony all the restrictions imposed in the time of the Electoral princes and the Lutheran Church were maintained in their fullest rigour. Saxony was rightly called the Protestant Spain of the Jews. Indeed they were not suffered to dwell in the country at all; only a few privileged Jews were admitted in the two towns of Dresden and Leipzig, but under the express condition that they could be expelled at any time. They were not allowed to have a synagogue, but only to meet for prayer in small rooms, on condition that they made no noise. In Leipzig and Dresden every privileged Jew was compelled to pay annually seventy thalers for himself, and other sums for his wife, children, and servants. The Jews were rigidly constrained in their choice of trades and occupations, and were placed under strict supervision during their travels, although all other German districts had abolished the poll-tax, which



Saxony alone still retained. The example of the two neighbouring countries — Westphalia and Prussia—had no influence upon this district, which at that time was rendered doubly selfish through petty trade and religious prejudice. The reaction that ensued later on found plenty of nourishment in Germany.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE REACTION AND GERMANISM.

The Jews in the Wars for Freedom—The Congress of Vienna—Hardenburg and Metternich—Rühs' Christian Germanism—Jew-hatred in Germany and Rome—German Act of Federation—Ewald's Defence of Judaism—Jew-hatred in Prussia—Lewis Way—Congress at Aix—Hep-hep Persecution—Hartwig Hundt—Julius von Voss—Jewish Avengers.

1813—1818.

LIKE the Persian monarch Xerxes, Napoleon, who had hitherto been invincible, and had grown haughty and brutal through his successes, now summoned the nations and princes to a universal war, and they followed him as submissively as slaves follow their master. Proudly he led forth Europe, already subdued by him, against Asiatic Russia. Within the memory of man such an immense expedition had not been known. But, as ever, the words of the text were fulfilled in this gigantic contest: "A vain thing for victory is the horse, nor shall he deliver any by his great strength." As in former times the finger of God, which has ever been extended in the cause of justice, was now manifested to him who had trampled upon all rights and liberty. Napoleon was not defeated by the power of his enemy, but by a Higher Hand which blinded his usually clear vision, and reduced it to childish folly. This blindness, which led to his destruction, was removed by the glow of the flames at Moscow and the ice of a Russian winter. When God and fortune had forsaken him, when the princes

who had promised to follow him to war and act faithfully, broke their promises, fell away from him, and turned the points of their swords against him, then the power of the people, which, relying upon his own warlike talents, he had so greatly despised, rose up against him. But the nations likewise were stricken with blindness, and whilst breaking asunder a part of their bonds only forged new ones for themselves. The two years (May, 1812—April, 1814) form an instructive chapter in history, from the moment when Napoleon led an army of more than half a million men against Russia, until the day when abandoned by all, he was compelled to flee, in order to escape the threats and insults of the French people, who were now embittered against him. It was a sanguinary, horrifying drama.

No one could have foreboded that the greater would drag down the less in its ruin, and that by the downfall of Napoleon, the Jews whom he had liberated, though reluctantly, would again be hurled into their former state of slavery. Jewish youths belonging to wealthy families had emulated their Christian friends in courage, and rushed to battle to help in slaying the giant. Large numbers of Jews, especially in Prussia, animated by a burning love of their Fatherland, had joined the troops as volunteers, had been joyfully accepted in the ranks, and had wiped away with their blood on the battle-field the stain of cowardice, so often imputed to them by the opponents to their emancipation. Jewish young men paid for the freedom accorded to them with their lives. Jewish doctors and surgeons sacrificed themselves in the camps and hospitals in their devoted attendance on the wounded and those stricken with the plague. Jewish women and girls spared no efforts and knew no considerations, in order to bring help and comfort to the wounded. At the same time there were to be found, as in every State where all



possessed independence, sons of the same family and of the same religion, who were opposed to each other—Germans and French, Italian and Dutch Jews, engaged in deadly combat, meeting with an honourable death, and who perhaps only recognised each other in the last dying hour, in time to embrace as brothers. Those who were unfit to bear arms had shown their attachment to Germany and their worthiness of emancipation by sacrifices in other ways. Nevertheless the seemingly forgotten Jew-hatred again became rekindled in the hearts of the Germans, extended ever further, and robbed the Jews of the reward which the hard-won victories had promised to bring even to them.

With the fall of the hero there began the rule of petty, intriguing, reckless speculators who bartered both men and lands. They misled the princes who had so long been trodden under foot, and who earnestly desired to set up freedom, and ensnared them with lying artifices. In France these intriguers, the Talleyrands, reinstated the throne of the Bourbons. In Germany Metternich and Gentz turned the struggle for freedom into a mockery. Only the more far-sighted knew that Europe, owing to the closer connection formed between the rulers, would again be reduced to a more degrading state of slavery, because the governments were hampered by petty rules and by sloth.

The Jews felt the first effects of the reaction now commencing in Germany. It arose in Frankfort, the seat of the fiercest anti-Semitism of the Middle Ages. As soon as the artillery of the retreating enemy had ceased within the precincts of this city, loud voices were heard, vying with each other in demanding that boundaries be set at once to the unheard-of presumption of the Jews. In Lübeck and Bremen, the citizens did not content themselves with depriving the Jews of their recently-acquired rights, but energetically strove to banish them alto-

gether. The proposal was seriously made to drive all adherents of the Mosaic religion from the town. In Hanover, Hildesheim, Brunswick, and Hesse, they were simultaneously divested of their rights of equalisation. These events naturally gave great anxiety to the Jews throughout Germany. If the privileges which had been granted to them by law, as in Frankfort, could be abolished, what security had they for the continuance of their rights of equality? What a contrast this reaction against them presented to the state of affairs in France! Here, although the nobility, who hated freedom and were thirsting for revenge, and the Catholic clergy were in power at the Court of Louis XVIII., and though the terrible events since 1789 had been obliterated as if they had never happened, yet the Jews were not deprived of their rights of citizenship. XX

The Jews, anxious for freedom, honour, nay for very existence, especially in the so-called free towns, directed their gaze towards the Congress of Vienna, which was once more to readjust dismembered Europe. The monarchical and diplomatic members of the Congress however, did not hasten to act the part of Providence as was expected of them. They indeed opened the meetings in November instead of in August, and from the bosom of this Congress, which was intended to establish eternal peace, a desolating war broke out. The community of Frankfort had sent two deputies to Vienna, one of whom was Jacob Baruch, the father of Börne, a man in high favour at the Viennese Court. Baruch fulfilled his task in a disinterested manner worthy of his great son. Together with his less known colleague, he presented a memorial (October, 1814) to the Congress, wherein arguments of every kind were clearly set forth for conceding their rights to the Frankfort Jews. They laid claim to a formal right because their equalisation had been duly purchased for a large sum, and to the patriotic right XXM.

inasmuch as they had taken part in the liberation of Germany. Their chief aim was to remove the authority which the Senate possessed over them. The Jews of the three Hanse Towns also sent a Christian lawyer as deputy, to guard their interests in Vienna, who of his own accord, had drawn up an appeal that equalisation be granted to the Jews. In combination with the deputies, certain influential personages worked quietly and unobtrusively. The banking-house of Rothschild by its circumspection and fortunate enterprises had raised itself to be a power in the money world; and not even prying suspicion could find any trace of dishonesty in the accumulation of its riches, which might be used as a pretext by anti-Jewish opponents. The founder of the house, Mayer Amschel Rothschild, was held in the highest esteem in Frankfort, and in consequence of the equalisation was admitted to the Elective College. Happily he died before the beginning of the reaction (September, 1812), and left five sons, who increased the wealth left by their father. Although they appear to have adhered to the principle that they would not throw the power of their riches into the scale on behalf of their co-religionists and their faith, yet they could not remain indifferent to the attempt made in Frankfort (where their house had been founded), to reduce the Jews again to a state of serfdom. One of the brothers probably addressed words of remonstrance to the deliberating German members of the Congress, and warned them against diminishing any of the rights of his co-religionists.

The statesmen who ruled the Congress for the administration of German affairs actually showed themselves favourable to the Jews. Hardenburg and Metternich in an important letter expressed their disapproval of the oppressions to which the Jews in the Hanse Towns were subjected (January, 1815), and advised the Senate, an advice which



amounted to a command, to treat them in a humane and upright spirit. Hardenburg pointed out to the Hanseans the example of Prussia and the edict of March 11th, 1812, and remarked, not without a trace of sarcasm, that they would not gain anything by depriving the Jewish houses of the prosperity to which they had attained, and that constant oppression would compel them to withdraw their capital. In the sketch of the constitution for Germany drawn up by the Prussian plenipotentiary, William von Humboldt, and which was laid before Metternich and accepted as a basis for the Council, the Jews were promised equality, even though they were to some extent to be kept apart. "The three Christian religious sects enjoy equal rights in all German States, and the adherents of the Jewish faith, as long as they undertake all the duties of citizenship, are to enjoy equal privileges in return for their services." But the goodwill of the two Chancellors, even though their sentiments were shared by the monarchs whom they represented, did not suffice at that time. A new enemy rose up against the Jews yet tougher and more dangerous than the sting of hunger and bourgeois pride. This terrible enemy, who now turned his arms against the Jews, was the German visionary. The yoke so long imposed on the Germans by the French, and the pressure under which they had been compelled to give up all their possessions, had rendered hateful to them, not alone everything French but all that was foreign, and which did not bear the stamp of pure German origin. Allowances are certainly to be made for a nation which had broken its fetters, and had just arrived at a consciousness of its strength and solidarity, especially when it had conceived an exaggerated notion of its own power. But it was both unpardonable and childish that grown men should dream in broad daylight, representing their dreams as truth and trying to

foist them upon others, for excessive Germanism was such a dream, and resulted in its own ruin. For the first time the German nation had become closely united, whereas hitherto it had been the slave of princes, and had wasted its energies in Roman expeditions, Turkish wars, or civil strife. The Germans sought in their own history for analogous cases, and found them only in the Middle Ages in the time of the Empire and the omnipotence of Papacy, or in the pre-Teutonic times when uncouth barbarism and childish simplicity prevailed. The romantic school of the Schlegels, Arnims, and Brentanos, had shown them this hoary spectre of the Middle Ages in such a wonderful light, that the Germans in their delusion considered it as an ideal, the realisation of which was a holy task. To the Middle Ages belong both Christianity and unthinking clericalism. Christian Germanism soon became the trump card by which they endeavoured to hold in check the unbelief of the French and the revolutionary epoch. From that time the hollow phrase, Christian German (or Teutsch), arose, and speedily became the catchword even amongst the most intelligent men.

But only the devoted followers of Catholicism could be pious in the sense of the Middle Ages, and with Papacy as its highest determining authority. To this end honourable Romanticists, such as Görres, Frederick Schlegel, Adam Müller, etc., steered their course, and actually went over to the Roman Church and helped to re-establish the Empire of the Jesuits and the Inquisition; "God had poured the spirit of confusion in their midst, and they tottered like drunken men." Instead of directing their gaze towards Vienna, where the Congress held sway amidst dancing and revelry, in the hope of running to earth its quarry, the German people, the Romanticists built castles in the air, and

announced in advance that certain people would be denied admission.

Christian Germanism was the armed spectre which for many decades robbed the German Jews of their rest, honour, and joy in life. Because this race, strongly marked by descent and tradition, was distinguished from the Germans by external indications, by features, deportment and mode of life, although actually similar in language, feeling and temperament, they were repelled as foreigners, as a force breeding disturbance and discomfort, and had the spirit of the times permitted, they would have been expelled from German territory. But in order to find a reason for this blind hate, the enemies of the Jews had recourse to ancient but contemptible publications, collections of rubbish, which others had found rich in intellectual treasures of the Jews, and drew such a portrait of them as to arouse terror both in themselves and others.

The first who clothed ignorant prejudices in words and heaped humiliations upon the Jews was not a knavish writer, but an academical professor named Friedrich Rühls, whom the newly-founded Berlin University had appointed to the chair of History. He wished to investigate the decline of Germany, and hit upon the idea that the Jews were the authors of Germany's disgrace during its occupation by foreign powers. Rühls explained the "Claims of the Jews to rights of German citizens," developed the unwholesome theory of a Christian state, and thence derived his justification to humble them, and if he did not actually advise the expulsion of the Jews from Germany, yet he showed that their progress should be hindered. He drew up a complete programme for treating them, which was afterwards conscientiously carried out.

Above all things he wanted the Jews merely to live on sufferance, and on no account to claim equal rights of citizenship. They were once more



to pay protection-money and a Jew-tax, and limits were to be set to their increase. The cities which had hitherto not tolerated them were to be supported in this course, and according to Rùhs' judgment the Jews should not be admitted to any office, nor even permitted to defend their country. Rùhs, moreover, insisted that the Jews should again wear a badge, not a repulsive yellow spot, but a "national cockade"; at any rate some mark of distinction, "that the German who could not recognise his Hebrew enemy by his face, gait, or speech, might do so by the doubtful badge of honour." Above all things, Rùhs exhorted the German States and the German people to promote the conversion of the Jews to Christianity; that was most important. It was generally asserted, even in Christian quarters, that only bad and abandoned men exchanged Judaism for Christianity; but that was prejudice. Rùhs' pamphlet excited great interest; various good and clever men explained that they perfectly agreed with him. The learned German world, which at the time of Lessing, Abt, Kant, and Herder was the apostolic messenger of universal love to man, now talked the language of the Church Fathers, and stirred up hate and persecution. Schleiermacher and Fichte brought the representatives of German intellect so low that they actually competed with the ultra-Catholics in hatred of the Jews. Pius VII., who in consequence of the Restoration once more reigned in the domains of the Church, and introduced the Inquisition, in order to drive out godlessness by means of the auto-da-fé, ordained that the Jews should again forfeit that freedom which they had enjoyed under French rule. The Jews of Rome had to forsake their beautiful houses in all parts of the city, and return again to the dirty, unhealthy Ghetto; the Middle Ages once again reigned in the province of the Church. The Jews, as in the

seventeenth century, had to attend sermons for their own conversion on pain of punishment. Meantime the history of the world exhibited one of those surprising interludes, which went to prove how temporary was the phase of the reactionary restoration. Napoleon had contrived to land on French ground despite the English guardians of the sea. The props of the Bourbon throne, the nobility, priests and intriguers who had won so much, now collapsed before a single shot had been fired, and Napoleon entered Paris in triumph. The empire of the hundred days was once more established. The whole of Europe armed itself against one single man, but the fortune of war nevertheless, decided in favour of the allies on the Dutch battle fields at Waterloo. In the Prussian army, which next to that of the English, had decisively turned the balance on the side of victory, there were many Jewish soldiers, and among them several officers of the reserve forces.

What sort of reward did the German Jews receive for their noble sacrifices to their fatherland? When the Congress, alarmed by Napoleon's sudden reappearance, ceased merely to dally and began to hold regular sittings, the Act of Federation for those German States which were to be united and yet separate, was brought under consideration, and a paragraph in it devoted to the Jews. The right of citizenship was assured to them, and they were to be removed as far as possible from countries where opposition was still offered to this reform. But this settlement was accepted only by Prussia and Austria; all the other members of the League, and especially those of the free towns, gave their votes against it. In order to arrive at an agreement, an insignificant compromise was proposed: "The Congress of Allies will consider how the civil improvement of those who profess the Jewish faith in Germany is to be effected in the most

harmonious manner, and how in particular the enjoyment of civil rights may be secured to them, without their being suffered to undertake municipal offices." Nevertheless, the privileges which had hitherto been already conceded them in the federated States were to be continued.

The first portion was straightforward, and could be accepted by all, since it remained open to every State to prevent its favourable interpretation. The latter portion, however, seemed suspicious to the free towns. There the Jews, through the French Government, were actually in possession of civil equality. Accordingly, the deputy for Frankfort (Syndicus Danz) emphatically protested, and was supported by the Saxon deputies. To shame German narrow-mindedness the Danish Government, as if it had anticipated that the hatred of Jews in Germany would spread, ordered Bernstorff, its representative for Holstein, to declare that the adherents of the Jewish faith should enjoy civil toleration there; and also protection from persecution, oppression, arbitrariness or uncertainty of legislation in respect of the rights conceded to them. The deputy for Bremen, Senator Schmidt, was cleverer; he did not protest, but evaded the suspicious resolution by a master-stroke. Remarking that the privileges of the Jews conferred by the French in North Germany (the 32nd military division) could not be binding on the Germans, he stated that they need only change the word *in* into *by*, and everything would be right. Nobody at first took any notice of this apparently insignificant change of word. And thus in the final draft, the mischievous word was adopted into the Act of Federation, in the clause referring to the Jewish question.

Metternich and Hardenburg, who hitherto either from inclination or in pursuance of instructions had appeared to favour the Jews, passed over



this point in an incomprehensible manner. Thus it came to stand in the Act of Federation. The rights which had hitherto been conceded to the professors of the Jewish faith by the several federated States were to be continued to them. Of the federated States, however, only Prussia and Mecklenburg, and perhaps also Baden, had conceded to the Jews the right of citizenship, which the majority had not. The enactment of the French authorities was thus made null and void, and Germany was saved. What did it matter to the delighted nation that this verbal change cost so many tears; the humiliations of the Jews soon showed itself in practical life. Lübeck, protected by a surreptitiously introduced paragraph, did not trouble itself much about the wrath of Germany which could not have serious results, and ordered more than forty Jewish families to leave the town (September, 1815). Bremen did the same with its Jews. Frankfort could not eject its Jewish inhabitants, but their lives were embittered, they were shut out from civil assemblies, Jewish functionaries were deposed, they were excluded from many trades and industries, solicitations for marriage made by Jewish couples were rejected with the heartlessness of the Middle Ages, they were forbidden to live in any part of the town, and were treated like the serfs in former times. As the Senate, however, knew that Prussia and Austria regarded it as a point of honour to preserve intact the civil rights of the Jews of Frankfort, and as the Federal Diet, at the instance of both great Powers, might easily determine the controversy in favour of the Jews, the Senate applied to three German juridical faculties, those of Berlin, Marburg, and Giessen, to have the question decided in a law-court.

This struggle between the Frankfort Senate and the Jews, which was protracted during nine years (1815-24), and which occasioned many vexations,

will ever remain a stain on the time, and a monument of German perverseness. The Jews, relying on the assurance of the two German Powers in authority, believed that their civil rights were guarded as by a triple wall.

But just this manifest truth, the Germanisers and sophists, who had suddenly developed into bigots, sought to obscure and cry down. From all parts of Germany there resounded simultaneously various outcries against the Jews, urging the nation, or the German Federation, to enslave the Jews or altogether to destroy them. Journals and pamphlets raged against them, as if Germany or Christendom could only be saved by the destruction of the Jews.

The most violent attack was that of a physician and professor of natural science at Heidelberg, J. F. Fries, "Danger to the welfare and character of the Germans through the Jews" (summer, 1816), in which he asserted the the Jews ought to be expelled the country, that the tribe must be exterminated root and branch, as they constituted a public danger to the State among all secret and political societies. "Merely ask any man whom you happen to meet whether every peasant and every civilian does not hate and curse the Jews as national pests and bread robbers." The Jews had contrived to get more than half the entire capital of Frankfort into their hands. "Let them only manage so for forty years longer, and the sons of the first Christian houses may seek service among the Jews in the meanest capacities." It is remarkable that in the face of such passionate incitement of the mob, wild outbreaks did not break out at that time against the Jews, especially as Fries' pamphlet was read in all taverns and public-houses.

Was there no Christian voice raised against this injustice? For the honour of the Germans it must be mentioned that some men had the

courage to contend against this crass prejudice and blind hatred. A highly respected and learned advocate in Ratisbon, August Krämer, wrote a special book in defence of the Jews, "The Jews and their just claims on the Christian States; an essay towards the mitigation of the cruel prejudices against the Jewish nation." Councillor Schmidt, in Hildburghausen, on the one hand, pictured the abominable scenes which Christian fanaticism practised against the Jews, and, on the other hand, showed the superiority of culture possessed by the latter over the Christians in Spain. But their most thorough-going advocate was a reformed clergyman of Carlsruhe, of high position, Johann Ludwig Ewald, who carried with him all the authority of his seventy years. Rüh's and Fries' malignant statements about the Jews incensed him so deeply, that he denied himself the quiet of a season in Baden, and employed the time in giving the lie to their impudent assertions in a pamphlet (1816). Ewald vindicated the downtrodden sons of Israel in the name of Christianity, whose representative he was. Every groundless complaint against them he dissolved into nothing. Nor were admonitions wanting to the Germans from England and France that they should not display their ignorance by their insane hatred of the Jews. An English paper showed that the town Lübeck, as well as all the free towns, must have forfeited their independence (of which they had made so infamous a use) in the eyes of the German Federation, on account of the ignorant intolerance which they displayed against the Jews. A French writer, M. Bail, vindicated the unhappy people in glowing language, and covered their German enemies with the brand of shame.

"The Jewish nation possesses the ancient and sanctified character to a higher degree than any other nation—a fact which excites astonishment. I can never meet a Rabbi adorned with a white beard



XX without thinking of the venerable patriarchs. Nothing is more elevating about the Israelites than their solemn life, which produces the most submissive and most honourable people on earth. In their midst is to be found the pattern of all domestic virtues, a loving care for the needy, and a profound reverence for parents. Happy, a thousand times happy, are the nations among whom this source of morality is preserved."

But if truth and justice had spoken with angels' tongues, the Germans of those days would have remained deaf to their voices. They were so deeply imbued with hatred of the Jews that they lost all perception.

An organ of the Austrian Government directed a sort of threat against the attacks of the people of Lübeck upon the rights of the Jews.

"How can the future Federal Diet discuss the question of the improvement of the condition of the Jews, when individual States anticipate the council by the most cruel and arbitrary resolutions? This conduct exhibits a want of respect as much towards the ensuing Federal Diet as towards the foremost courts of Germany, whose principles in regard to this matter have been often and loudly enough expressed."

What did Austria itself do after indulging in such righteous indignation against Lübeck on behalf of the Jews? Francis II. and his Prime Minister Metternich, completely forgot the benevolent intentions of Joseph II., and only kept in mind the hateful laws of Maria Theresa against the Jews. They did not indeed expel the Jews, as in Lübeck and Bremen, but they came near doing so. The Jews were relegated to Ghettos in Austria, beyond which they were not allowed to pass. Tyrol, the mountainous country of monasteries, was closed to them as it was to Protestants. In Bohemia the mountain cities and villages were inaccessible to them, and in Moravia, on the other hand, in the great cities of Brünn and Olmütz, they were only allowed to stay over-night or to remain for a short time. Everywhere Jewstreets sprang into existence; the restrictions imposed on the Jews of Austria became proverbial, whilst in Galicia they met with

greater oppression than in the Middle Ages. Even the benevolent regulations of Joseph II., in regard to compulsory school attendance and practical religious instruction, were carried out not so much to spread culture among the Jews as to torment and humiliate them. The Emperor Francis certainly ennobled a few Jews, but the others were degraded; they were obliged to render military service, but the bravest amongst them were rarely admitted even to the lowest rungs of the military ladder.

Austria had at all events made the Jews no promises, and had awakened no hope for freedom. But Prussia, where they already enjoyed full rights of citizenship, conjured up a hobgoblin worthy of the Middle Ages, and at the same time wounded their honour the more deeply. Frederick William III., who had confirmed the equality of the Prussian Jews by law, caused it to be a dead letter by preventing the accomplishment of it. Unconscious of the theory of the Christian State set up by the Germanisers and sophists, he insisted that no place of honour be conceded the Jews. The promised equalisation of the Jews in the newly-acquired or re-conquered provinces was continually delayed. In those provinces they remained subject to the restrictions of a former time, and Prussia excited attention by a remarkable and savage piece of legislation regarding the Jews, twenty-one different principles for their treatment being enacted. They were divided into sections, such as French, old Prussian, Saxon, and Polish Jews, naturally to their disadvantage.

The specific aim of Prussia was to make the Jews despicable in society. Whereas formerly the Government had been at pains to avoid in official correspondence the name Jew, Jewish, as having an offensive signification, this designation was now brought into use.

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The Judæophobic spirit in Prussia showed itself also in a case which challenged comparison with France. The unjust Napoleonic law, which had suspended the equality of the Jews of the German departments for ten years in respect of free migration and commerce, was to fall into abeyance after the end of the respite (17th of March, 1818), in the event of its not being prolonged. But the Government of Louis XVIII., although overwhelmed by the clerical and political reaction, did not for a moment make any attempt to preserve this limitation intact. In the Chamber which occupied itself with this point (Feb. and March, 1818), only one hostile voice was raised against the Jews in Alsace. It was alleged that the whole country would soon be in the hands of the Jews if a check was not put to their greed. Not even the Right, which was clerically disposed, uttered a word against the Jews in general and for the restriction of their liberties. The phantom of a Christian State was quite unknown to the French. The Chamber rejected Lathier's proposal, and thus the Jews of Alsace were once more restored to their former equality. A similar entrammeling law had formerly been passed against the Jews of the district on the left bank of the Rhine, which was included in Prussia, or the Rhine province and Westphalia. The Prussian Government, on taking this former French territory under its charge, had enacted the continuance of restrictive legislation, and a Cabinet order of March 3rd, 1818, renewed it for an indefinite period.

About this time a distinguished Englishman, with the Bible of the Old and New Testaments in his hand, advocated the equality and freedom of the Jews throughout Europe with extraordinary zeal. Lewis Way, a disciple of the enthusiasts of the fifth monarchy from the time of the English war of Independence, eagerly accepted the pro-



phesies of the Old Testament and the Apocalypse, and was convinced that the Jewish nation would once more be re-established and restored in glory to the land of their fathers. Only when they had recovered their independence would they be converted to the doctrines of Jesus. It was therefore a matter of conscience to him to promote the welfare of the Jews as much as possible. For this object he made a journey to Poland in order to ascertain the number and condition of the Jews in that country. Way now elaborated a remarkable memoir, in which he threw light on the high significance of the Jews in the past, and also in the future. With this memoir he betook himself to Aix, where the king of Prussia and the emperors of Russia and Austria with their ministers and diplomatists were met in Congress (end of Sept., 1818). He sought, moreover, to make a favourable impression on the Emperor Alexander, whose mystical temperament was known to him. As soon as the Czar should show himself in favour of the equalisation of the Jews, it could not be doubted that Frederick William III. and the Emperor Francis would also be well disposed towards it. Way started with the supposition that the Jews were a nation of kings, and had not ceased to be so even in exile, nor in the misfortunes of their tragical career. With this people lay the key to the history of the whole globe. The same divine grace which had guided them in former times still rested on them in banishment and exile. The promises which the prophets had foretold for the Israelite race would not fail to be accomplished; they would once more be gathered together in the land of their fathers. All the nations of the earth would receive salvation, and they were bound by gratitude to show the Jews the greatest honours and boundless beneficence, so as to wipe out the debt which they owed to this divinely-gifted race for the cruel perse-

cutions inflicted on them. The present moment was highly favourable to their complete liberation. Fanatical and narrow-minded clamourers had raised their voices against the emancipation of the Jews in many countries, but they no more represented public opinion than did the furious outcries of the few American planters, when raised in favour of the oppression of slaves. If Way was an enthusiast, who tried to prove the necessity of emancipation in a mystical manner from prophetic and apocalyptic verses, he was still true enough to the practical instincts of his race to be able to prove to their majesties what profit the emancipated Jews would bring to the State. He conceded that much must be altered, but the better part of the Jews, their national peculiarity, was a holy property which must not be touched. It was the invisible tie which bound the past of the Jewish nature with its future, and the past of mankind with their future: the fulfilment of prophecy depended on Israel.

This mystical and yet sensible memorial was handed by Way to the Emperor of Russia, on whom it must have made an impression, for he delivered it to his plenipotentiaries, Nesselrode and Capo D'Istrias, charging them to bring the emancipation of the Jews under the notice of the Congress. Out of respect for Alexander, who at that time pulled the strings of European politics, the plenipotentiaries were obliged to give some attention to the matter, if only in appearance. They accordingly issued a document (November 21st, 1818) that, though they could not join in the point of view of the writer of the memorial, they must render justice to the tendency and laudable aim of his conclusions. The plenipotentiaries of Austria and Prussia (Metternich, Hardenburg, and Bernstorff) declared themselves ready to give every attention to the question in both monarchies, so as to aid in

solving a problem which was important both for the statesman and philanthropist; but this was no more than a courtly phrase. Another voice uttered inspiring words in favour of the German and Polish Jews at the Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle. Michael Berr, like his father, untiringly active in effecting the elevation of his co-religionists, poured forth the stream of his oratory in their cause.

“In Charlemagne’s favourite city the monarchs will finally decide concerning the political existence of my co-religionists in Germany. The honour of Germany, the honour of the age and that of monarchs, loudly demands the reinstatement of the Jews in their civil and political rights. With justice are they exercised by and excited against the laws, which still here and there exist to the disadvantage of the Jews.”

The Italian Jews also combined and sent a petition to the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle concerning the abolition of their grievances and persecution. They gained nothing, however, by the discontinuance of these ills. The time had passed when princes and statesmen, sages and citizens, allowed themselves to interfere with “the improvement of the conditions of the Israelites,” as the phrase ran.

The ill-feeling against the Jews in Germany continued to progress without ground or provocation. Jewish preachers celebrated the national battle of Leipsic (18th October, 1818), in the synagogue with great enthusiasm, but this was no proof to the Germanisers of their patriotic love. The hatred against the Jews assumed so violent a character that a writer not badly disposed foretold the outbreak of popular attacks on life and property.

Evil passions were at that time intensely aroused in Germany by the murder of Kotzebue, in Mannheim, by a half-mad Christian student, Karl Sand (March, 1819), and by the harsh regulations of the Government against demagogic and Germanising movements, which they had formerly



fostered. The Germanisers panted for a sacrifice, and, as they could not attack the statesmen such as the Metternichs, Gentzs, and Kamptzs the helpless Jews were marked as victims. A series of brutal outbreaks followed during many successive months. With the cry of "Hep, hep!" against the Jews, the Middle Ages revived again like a jeering ghost, and persecution was once more galvanised into life by the student and commercial classes.

The City of Würzburg commenced the attack. A new professor was inducted into office (2nd August), amidst the rejoicings by the students, who were joined by a large number of people. Suddenly an old professor, Brendel, was noticed, who had shortly before written in favour of the Jews, for which it was alleged that he had received as payment a box full of ducats. On seeing him, there resounded from the mouths of the students the insane cry, "Hep, hep!" together with the outcry "Jude, verreck," *i.e.*, "Jew, die like a beast." The expression, then used for the first time, meant in student's slang, "Jerusalem is destroyed" (*Hierosolyma est Perdita*). Brendel was pursued, and had to fly for safety. A perfect fury took possession of the people of Würzburg, who broke into the shops of the Jews, throwing the goods into the streets, and when they took to arms or defended themselves with stones, the bitterness increased to frenzy. A regular battle ensued, many wounds were received, and several persons were killed. About forty citizens took part in this affray. The military had to be called out, or the Jews would have been massacred. The next day the burghers appealed to the civic authorities to order the dismissal of the Jews from Würzburg, and to this they had to submit. Overcome with grief, about four hundred Jews of all ages left the town, and encamped for several days in the villages

or under tents, looking forward to a terrible future. The persecution of the Jews in Würzburg was repeated in Bamberg, and in almost every town of Franconia. Wherever a Jew showed himself, he was assailed with the insulting cry of "Hep, hep!" and ill-treated.

This persecution of the Jews in Franconia was a hint to the Frankforters how to humble their hated fellow-citizens, especially those who had dared to bring an action against the Senate, and who had protectors on the Council of the Allies. Thus a riot was re-enacted here (9th and 10th August), which began with the cry, "Hep, hep!" and with the breaking of windows in Jewish houses; then the mob advanced to brutality, and drove away all Jews from the promenades with insults and outrage. Artizans, workmen, shop assistants, secretly encouraged by their employers, as in the time of Vincent Fettmilch, two centuries before, made violent attacks on Jewish houses. A house of the Rothschilds' in particular was selected for attack, their wealth and importance being as a thorn in the side of Christian patricians. In Paris at this time, various ambassadors and diplomatic representatives appeared at a ball given by James Rothschild, and in Germany the Rothschilds were still treated as pedlars. Many wealthy Jews left Frankfort after this outrage. The storm, which became a frenzy in Frankfort, the seat of the League, was not disregarded by the ambassadors. The moneys of the League were placed in Rothschild's coffers for security. The president, Count von Buol Shanenstein, summoned a conference of members to the Council, and it was resolved to call out the troops of the League, as the city militia could not be trusted. Thus the persecution of the Jews in Frankfort aroused great attention throughout Europe, but the excitement against them continued, in spite of the arrival of troops which had been drafted into the

town. Several Jews consequently sold their houses, and even the Rothschilds, who put no trust in the lull, had serious thoughts of leaving Frankfurt; they would have had to emigrate to France or England, as they were not safe anywhere in Germany.

This massacre of the Jews spread like wildfire in Germany, as if the people had waited everywhere for a sign to break out. In Darmstadt and Bai-reuth the riots were again repeated (12th August). The few Jews in Meiningen were expelled. In Carlsruhe, one morning, a placard was found posted on the synagogue and on the houses of influential Jews — “Death and destruction to the Jews!”

In Düsseldorf the doors of several Jewish houses were found marked by black marks and threatening placards. In the territory of Baden, where Sand had sealed the Germanising folly with a murder, and the excitement of passions still lasted, the bitterness against the Jews was so great that not one dared appear in the streets. In Heidelberg a tumult arose (beginning of September) in consequence of a vulgar scene, which placed the character of German chivalry in a peculiar light. A citizen had outraged a Jewish maiden, and had been arrested by the police. Nearly the whole populace immediately rushed to rescue the hero and destroy the Jewish houses. The cries of “Hep, hep!” resounded in the streets; axes, crowbars, tools of all sorts were collected as if to carry a place by storm. The city guard, which ought to have dispersed the assaulting party, refused their services. The city governor, Pfizer, instead of standing by the persecuted, ~~assisted~~ assisted their assailants. Blood would have been spilled had not the Heidelberg students, humanised perhaps by their intercourse with France, defended the unprotected people at their own risk, under the leadership of two pro-



fessors, Daub and Thibaut. When at length the armed force appeared, and patrols swept through the whole province of Baden, and every small town and village was made responsible for the attacks of certain of their number upon the Jews, the outbreaks against the Jews gradually subsided, but the hatred against them in consequence was only intensified.

“From Germany the spark of hatred against Jews flew even into the capital of the Danish State,” which a few years before had extended the right of citizenship to the Jews, and had never again revoked it. In Copenhagen the mob rose up (September), and commenced by throwing stones at the Jews, but ended with acts of violence. The Government proclaimed martial law. The citizens, in the few cities where the Jews lived, stood by them, and the preachers preached tolerance and love to them, from the pulpit. In Germany the ministers of religion did not utter a single protest during these outrageous scenes. In order that no trace of the persecution of the Jews of the Middle Ages might be wanting, a synagogue was stormed in a small Bavarian place, and the scrolls of the Law rudely torn to pieces. Even in those places, where actual violence could not be resorted to, the insulting cry of “Hep, hep!” was hurled at the Jews both in small and large towns, to the amusement of the spectators. The police or military force which appeared against the rioters and disturbers secretly took part against the Jews, and the Governments which protected them did so more from fear, because they suspected a demagogical movement behind the outbreaks against the Jews. Reference was afterwards made to these outrages as though to show the feeling of the people, or rather that this evidence of their ill-feeling towards the Jews was an excuse for withholding equal rights from them.

The zenith of the Germanising hatred against the

Jews was reached by the inflammatory pamphlet which appeared at this time of the excitement, "The Mirror of the Jews" (November, 1819). XXX Hartwig Hundt, a man of adventurous life, boldly advocated the slaughter of the Jews. He made very laudable propositions, which, as he flattered himself, would satisfy the "Hep, hep" people.

"Although I am not in favour of the execution of a Jew either for a sin or a crime, but only for a police offence, I would nevertheless never counsel that he be condemned and punished unheard, as it seems to be the fashion elsewhere."

What then? His proposals were:—

"Let the children of Israel be sold to the English, who could employ them in their Indian plantations instead of the blacks. In order that they may not increase, the men should be emasculated, and their wives and daughters be lodged in houses of shame. The best plan would be to purge the land entirely of this vermin, either by exterminating them, or as Pharaoh and the people of Meiningen, Würzburg, and Frankfort did, by driving them from the country."

The "Hep, hep" storm and Hundt-Radowsky's murderous lessons were the poisonous fruit of the seeds which Fichte and Schleiermacher had sown and which had shot up quickly and powerfully.

The inflammatory book of Hundt-Radowsky, in which every word is an abomination, was as ravenously swallowed by the German reading public as were his bad novels. At first, at the request of the Jews, it was forbidden and confiscated by the censorship, which had become omnipotent through the Carlsbad regulations. In Portugal, about the same time, a motion was brought forward in the Cortes to re-admit the banished Jews and atone for the crimes perpetrated against them, whilst in Germany, authors and statesmen justified this crime, and wished it to be repeated in the nineteenth century. Hundt did not stand alone in his advocacy of the extirpation of the Jews. Who could reckon up all these virulent, hostile writings against the Jews from the years of the "Hep, hep" storm?

Conversation on questions of the day, however remote from the subject of the Jews, always ended in abuse of them. If a greybeard wished to glorify Sand and his murder of Kotzebue, and to praise his Christian religious spirit, he did not fail to add that Christian hate would call down a day of judgment upon the Jews, the pursuers of usury, even though no writer had ever yet printed a syllable to the disadvantage of the Jews.

Thus the hand of all was against them; no defender of any weight or influence appeared for them, whose word, if it could not silence, might at least curb the opposition. The aged Jean Paul (Friedrich Richter) did not raise his voice for them, although he had a predilection for the Jews; nor Varnhagen von Ense, although Rachel was his wife and was included in the general obloquy. Only one writer overcame his prejudice, and defied public opinion in order to take up cudgels on behalf of the universally despised and downtrodden Jews. This was the comic poet Julius von Voss, whose voice certainly had no great weight, whose shattered reputation in addition roused the suspicion that Jewish liberality had encouraged his venturesomeness. Voss himself in his comedies and novels had sacrificed the Jews to his love for ridicule, but from regret and remorse confessed that he desired to protect the Jews against the accumulated "Hep, hep" insults. His words were little regarded and even derided. Still less impression was created by the anonymous writings of various freemasons in favour of the Jews, though their goodwill should at any rate have been recognised. But the converted Jews conducted themselves at this juncture in a shameful manner. Not one of them, except Börne, came forward in behalf of their former brethren, with that just indignation which violence against the defenceless ought to inspire. Rachel von Varnhagen, it is true, wrote to her brother, Ludwig Robert, who had been



a witness of the "Hep, hep" storm, in the following manner:—

"I am intensely moved, as I have never yet been, on account of the Jews. They are to be preserved but only for torture, for contumely, for insult, for brutal outrage. The hypocritical newborn love for the Christian religion (God forgive me for my sin!), for the Middle Ages with its art, poetry, and hideousness, incites the people to the only abomination to which, keeping in mind all past experiences, it can still be incited. It is not the action of the people who are taught to cry "Hep, hep." The professors Fries and Rühls, and others such as Arnim, Brentano, 'our connections,' and yet greater persons are filled with prejudices."

She thought that the Christian priests ought to step forward to check the outrages of the people. "Aye, the priests." But neither Rachel, nor her brother Robert nor her husband Varnhagen, who elaborated their periods for every childish folly, and had a voice in public opinion, raised it against violence, and against the rule of oppression.

The Jews had, it is true, their own literary supporters to protect them. In Germany alone there were nearly forty Jewish writers who could address the German public. They possessed two Jewish organs, and the daily journals occasionally opened their pages to them. They advanced boldly to the battle-field to ward off the universal accusations against their race. Even the aged David Friedländer raised his voice, wrung his hands over the enemies of the Jews and their persecutions in Germany in the nineteenth century, and could not conceive, though he considered official Christianity and the State as ideal, how these gods could wallow in so much filth. He addressed himself to the Countess von Recke, and reminded her of the time in which eminent Christians conversed harmlessly with Jews and received mutual instruction from one another. This sounded like a forgotten fairy tale from ancient days. But all the Jewish combatants only threw light missiles, and could scarcely prick the thick hide of prejudice.

For this purpose sharp and heavy harpoons were necessary. At this point the Guide of all history, who had not abandoned the Jews, awakened for them two avenging angels, who with fiery scourges lashed the perverseness of the Germans. These avenging spirits, who brought the Germans more blessings even than their guardian angels, were Ludwig Börne and Heinrich Heine.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### BÖRNE AND HEINE.

Börne and Heine—Börne's Youth—His Attitude to Judaism—His Love of Liberty—His Defence of the Jews—Heine: his Position with regard to Judaism—The Rabbi of Bacharach—Heine's Thoughts upon Judaism—Influence of Börne and Heine—Changes in Judaism—Mode of Thought—Jacobson's Reforms—The Hamburg Temple—Lieberman and Jacobson—Lazar Riesser—Party Strife—Isaac Bernays—Isaac Mannheimer: his Relations to the Viennese Community—Edward Gans.

1819—1830.

WHY should not Börne and Heine also have a page in Jewish history? Not only did Jewish blood flow in their veins, but they were also imbued with true Jewish spirit.

The flashes of light which they caused to flit across Germany, now in the colours of the rainbow and again in glaring flashes, were charged with the electricity of Jewish Talmudism. Both Börne and Heine, indeed, nominally renounced Judaism, but only like combatants who, by assuming the enemy's uniform and colours, could all the more easily strike him and thoroughly annihilate him. Both expressed, with a clearness which left nothing to be desired, how much they cared for the religion of the cross, which they professed. There is therefore not the slightest reason why Christianity should count Börne and Heine as members of its flock on account of that idle ceremony through which they passed in Church. One of them at any rate, in spite of his changing moods, remained more true at heart to Judaism than did the Friedländers



who feigned to be its representatives. These two gifted individuals are therefore the greater ornament to Judaism. To these two Jews, the Germans owe their pure taste, their feeling for truth and their impulse for liberty—to these two Jews, who were persecuted through life with the abominable “Hep, hep.” The mists of the Middle Ages, with which the Germans artificially surrounded themselves in order to obscure the truth, were dispersed by the flashes of wit of Börne and Heine, and light in its purity was thus restored. They grafted wit and life on to German literature, and banished that clumsiness and awkwardness which had been a laughing-stock amongst the neighbouring nations. X NH

In their childish spite against the Jews, the Germanisers, Rühs and Hundt-Radowsky, asserted that Judaism could not produce a man of forcible character, or a mind with a true sense of art. History thereupon gave them the lie, and put them to shame. Judaism furnished forth a vigorous apostle of liberty, with a language recalling that of the prophets and of the Roman Catos, and who confounded all the ideas of the Germans concerning public law. Judaism also supplied a poet, with an artistic sense characterised by a mixture of pathetic poetry and cutting irony, who abolished all the hard and fast rules of art. The rich and varied blossoms of the Börne-Heine mind sprang from Jewish soil, and were only watered by European culture. Hence the close connection between them in spite of their dissimilarity and mutual antipathy. Not only was their wit Jewish, but also their love of truth, their aversion to falsehood, their hatred of obscure and veiled sayings, their contempt for official pomp, for obscuring clouds of incense, against ringing of bells, overweening pride, slavery, perversion of the law, and murder. The democratic, freedom-loving spirit, noticeable in Börne more even than in Heine, and XXX NH NH

the analytical mode of reasoning, according to the method of Spinoza—which characterizes Heine more than the former—are Jewish to the core. Had they been born Christians, and brought up by slavish admirers of red-tapeism, neither of them would have developed as a rescuing power, which, with laughing *mien*, helped to banish deeply-rooted perversions and absurdities. They who were slaves, became deliverers, and saved their enemies from the double yoke of political and social inferiority. The Germanisers almost deserved thanks for having tormented the Jews during their retrograde movement. They roused, if not Heine, yet Börne, who was more inclined for idle speculation, and forced him to take up arms and strike against the enemy.

Ludwig Börne, or Löb Baruch (born in Frankfort-on-Maine, 1786; died in Paris, 1837), saw the light in the same year in which it became extinguished for Mendelssohn, as though history wished to compensate the bereaved Jews and make amends for the loss of the sage of Berlin. Börne resembled Mendelssohn in some respects: in his timid, bashful, somewhat awkward bearing, in his self-control, his strength of character, and the strict manner in which he followed a fixed system of morality. Both became the objects of admiration by accident, and without expressly wishing it. Both drew up for themselves æsthetic rules of conduct without having been trained to do so.

Börne despised the Jews of his time, and spoke of them as if he were their arch-enemy. He looked upon the picture of Jewish antiquity as a caricature which had been misrepresented to him whilst yet a youth, and which had been still more dimmed by his intercourse in Berlin, and in the house of Henriette Herz. The ancient Jews from the day of Abraham until the time of “wealthy Solomon” appeared to him “as if they had wished to parody

the world's history." He did not suspect how much his inward self, the genuineness of his nature, owed to Judaism. The filth of Lucinde, consecrated by Schleiermacher, so disgusted Börne at the age of sixteen, that even a stealthy perusal of the book possessed no charm for him. The same sobriety with which Judaism had endowed him, showed Börne the right way of balancing his ideal nature, and avoiding too harsh a discord with the real world. At an early age he became acquainted with a goddess, for whom he raved with love, and to whom he remained faithful until his dying breath. "The true nature of virtue may be expressed in a few words. What is virtue? Virtue is bliss. And what is bliss? It is liberty. We cannot further inquire as to what liberty is, for liberty is the one attribute that is in accord with reason, in accord with God, and in accord with the unconditional, and which explains itself." So thought and wrote Börne in his diary at the age of eighteen years; and this idea governed his inner being as long as he lived, and was the motive power of all his actions. Virtue is liberty, and liberty is virtue; they necessitate and produce bliss. Yet Börne knew a limit to his love of liberty; he guarded himself from overstepping that narrow boundary at which the pursuit of an ideal turns to madness.

May not his Jewish blood, or at any rate, the sad pages of Jewish history, explain his worship of that liberty, which influences body and mind? How hard and degrading the absence of liberty was could only be felt by the Jew, in comparison with whom an Indian or even a Russian bondsman was a free man. Frankfort, the birth-place of Börne, with its disgraceful laws concerning the residence of Jews, effectually taught him the love of liberty. When only a boy, he was prohibited from walking on the foot-path, and had to keep to the dusty road for vehicles,



when every ragged Christian beggar, or drunkard, was allowed to call to him "Mach Mores Jud!" the thought may have struck him that the absence of liberty was damnation, and the presence of liberty salvation. "I, a slave by birth, love liberty more than you, and because I have been trained in servitude I understand liberty better than you;" this he repeated often. His much admired style, his captivating descriptions, which he brought to perfection, and which were clothed in profound and well-rounded sentences, recall the sayings of Biblical and Talmudic wisdom expressed as proverbs. In short, Börne owes his favourable points to Judaism. But he was neither grateful for his gifts, nor did he acknowledge their origin, which he estimated no more than did his friends of Berlin. On one occasion he indeed pronounced the following words:—

"I should not deserve to enjoy the light of the sun, were I on account of that mockery, upon which I have always looked with contempt, ungrateful for God's great favour, in having made me at the same time a German and a Jew: for I know how to value the undeserved fortune of being at the same time a German and a Jew, to be able to strive after all the virtues of the Germans without participating in their faults."

He added, moreover, addressing the Germans:—

XXX "I pray you do not despise my Jews. If you were only as they are, then you were better. You have deprived the Jews of the atmosphere, but they have thus been preserved from rotteness; you have strewn the salt of hatred into their hearts, but their hearts have thus been kept fresh. You have imprisoned them for the whole long winter in a cellar and stopped up the cellar door with dung; but you, exposed to the frost, have become half frozen to death. When spring arrives, we shall see who will blossom first, Jew or Christian."

Börne did not, however, himself believe in the endurance of the Jews, and he gave utterance to those words only because he was provoked, or in order to provoke the Germans. He said also at the same time, ironically: "You know how my heart beats for the Jews."

Since the time when his mind began to mature, he beheld in the Jews only money-makers, as on the

Exchange at Frankfort, or as deriders of religion, ashamed of their race, as in the salon of Henriette Herz, and moreover, his education had caused Judaism to be so despicable to his way of thinking that he did not judge it worthy of consideration. Börne did not understand what was most sacred to the Jews, whom he greatly despised, and he was unable to fathom the depths of his own mind, and to discriminate between what he owed to the general state of culture and what to Judaism.

His healthy spirit, however, and love for the oppressed guarded him from the unprincipled conduct of Rachel, of those who frequented the salons at Berlin, and of many others who turned their backs contemptuously upon the Jews. Even as a youth Börne hated the idea that the word "Jew" might be insultingly cast at him.

"And if they once come and tell you that you are a Jew," he wrote in his diary, "they bandy about the Jewish jargon, so that one must almost die of laughter.

"Oh! when I think of that, my mind is tossed as by a storm, my soul would fain burst from its dwelling-place and seek the body of a lion, that it might meet the villain with jaw and claw."

His anticipations proved correct, he was not spared the insult, and his lion's claw was shown. While yet a student, he procured from the police of Frankfort a travelling passport, in which the spiteful police-clerk had inserted the words: "Jew of Frankfort."

"My blood stood still, but I could neither say nor do anything, for my father was present. I then swore in my heart: only wait, the time will come when I shall write a passport for you, a passport for all of you."

It seemed as if Börne were to forget his oath for the moment. The Jews of Frankfort had bought the right of equality for half a million of money, and Börne, who studied law and had shown himself to be a young man of promise, was made one of the chief officers of the police in Frankfort. But

if Börne forgot that he was a Jew, and only remembered that he was a German, the people of Frankfort did not forget it, and imprudently and brutally reminded him of his secret oath. He was the first victim of the reaction; he was expelled from office, in the same way as the Jews of Frankfort were driven back into the Ghetto. The insolent manner in which they were cheated out of the freedom which had been promised on three occasions, strongly excited Börne's feeling for liberty, and he discharged his first arrows in defence of the members of his own race. These were directed against the narrow-minded citizens of Frankfort, who in the nineteenth century had restored the laws of 1616 concerning the residence of the Jews, constituting what Börne called "that romance of villainy." The feelings which agitated him during the years of the ever-increasing reaction against the Jews he put into the mouth of a Jewish officer in a novel.

"You stole from me the pleasures of childhood, you arrant knaves! You threw salt into the sweet cup of my youth, you placed malicious slander and hateful derision in my road to manhood; arrest me you could not, but fatigued, vexed, and without joyfulness, I reached my goal. . . . That revenge even should have left me, that I should not have the power to forgive, nor the power to chastise! They are out of my reach in their fox-hole! . . . You ask me why I shun my fatherland. I have none; I have never left my home. My home is in dungeons; where there is persecution I breathe the atmosphere of my childhood. The moon is as near to me as is Germany."

Instead of revenging himself for the wounds inflicted upon him and upon the members of his race, by German Jew-hatred, Börne undertook the difficult task of extinguishing this hatred. In the "Waage," his organ, he erected ideal standards, by which he measured the narrow, petty incidents among the Germans, and their short-sightedness.

Before Louis Baruch undertook his campaign against German faults and prejudices, or rather before he undertook the education of the Germans, he renounced Judaism, was baptised in Offenbach, and



assumed the name Karl Ludwig Börne (June 5th, 1818). How little he cared for the confession of the Christian faith we may judge from his remark that he "repented the money spent on baptism." He did not wish the effect of his missiles to be lessened by the prejudice which might arise from the fact of their being discharged by a Jew. It is, however, difficult to reconcile with Börne's character the fact that, without any previous battle with himself such as Heine had fought, he deserted the side of the weak and oppressed, who should have appealed to him through their very humility, and further that his confession was a falsehood. The Germans soon discovered in him an author who reminded them of Lessing. Börne's wit was felt the more keenly, because at every turn one could perceive the correctness of the picture and observe the genuineness and integrity of the painter. A glance revealed that he wrote with "heart and soul," and hence his words made as deep an impression as if they had been weighty deeds.

He could not behold in silence the folly and cruelty of the "Hep, hep" year, and he wrote "for the Jews." "I should have said for right and liberty; but if these terms were understood, there would be no anxiety, and nothing need be said." He pointed his finger at fools, and threw a light on the faces of villains. "A sort of predestined necessity," he thought, "was connected in past times with Jew-skirmishes. These seem to have arisen from an indistinct, inexplicable feeling inspired by Judaism, which, like a scoffing and threatening spirit, like the ghost of a murdered mother, accompanied Christianity from its cradle onwards." Börne thereupon analysed German Jew-hatred into its constituents, and showed the absurdity of every one of these. On another occasion (1820) he told them the stern truth:

“I pardon the German nation for its Jew-hatred, for it is a nation in its infancy, and for this reason, just like an infant, needs a running cart to enable it one day to stand firm on its legs, so that at the barriers of liberty it may learn to do without such barriers. The German nation would collapse a hundred times in a day if it were without prejudices. But individual adults I cannot pardon for their Jew-hatred.”

Dr. Ludwig Holst, a newly-fledged Jew-hater, who had developed his cult into a philosophical system, and who, as Börne says, sounded “a metaphysical Hep, hep,” was attacked by him with scoffs and sneers.

“The hatred of the Jews is one of those Pontine bogs which poison the beautiful land of our liberty. We see the hopeful friends of the fatherland with pale faces wandering about hopelessly. German minds dwell on the Alps, but German hearts cower down in damp marshes. Holst wishes to kill the Jews, and if they resist, he turns round to his circle of on-lookers and says: ‘Now you see that I am right in taxing the Jews with unparalleled insolence; they will not suffer themselves to be struck on the head ever so little.’ . . . ‘You hate the Jews, not for their own sakes, but for their earnings. . . . The privileges you grant to the Jews are accorded also to beasts. The privileges of seeking food, of devouring it, of sleeping, and of multiplying are enjoyed also by the beasts of the field until they are slain, and to the Jews you grant no more’ . . . ‘Men of Frankfort, Hamburg, Lübeck, and Bremen answer me. You complain that Jews are all usurers, and yet you prevent the mental development of those who desire to have nothing to do with usury! I shall not be turned away; I demand a reply. Men of Frankfort, tell me: Why should the practice of medicine be restricted to only four Jews, and that of the law be allowed to none? . . . In the same way in which you, in your free city now storm against the Jews, did you not twenty years ago storm against Catholics? . . . Do you doubt the arrival of the day which will command you to look upon Jews also as your equals? But you wish to be *forced!* The German is deaf. You will not obey voluntarily; fate will have to take hold of you and drag you hither and thither. Shame upon you!’ Börne remarks in conclusion: ‘I love neither Jew as Jew, nor Christian as Christian; I love them because they are human beings, and born to be free. Liberty shall be the soul of my pen, until it has become blunted or my hand has become lamed.’”

But Börne wished the Jews to forget as a bad dream their history of a thousand years, and to become Germans. He did not possess the far-sightedness of Heine.

Heinrich Heine (born in Düsseldorf, 1799, died in Paris, 1854) was in his innermost self infinitely more of a Jew than Börne; he possessed, indeed, to a great extent all the favourable and unfavourable

characteristics of Jews. Who can paint this "wicked favourite of the Graces and Muses" (as he was called), this scoffing romancer and lyrical philosopher with his chameleon-like nature? Börne's mind resembled transparent spring-water, which trickles over pebbles, and only foams when attacked by winds. Heine's mind, on the other hand, resembled a whirlpool, upon whose surface the sunbeams play, forming prismatic colours, but which drags approaching vessels into its roaring depths, and dashes them to pieces unless they are of the strongest build. For Heine was just as deep a thinker as he was an artistic poet, as unrelenting a critic as he was an amiable scoffer, as full of original thoughts as he was of verses. Heine had not to search for Truth; Truth flew to Heine. She, like the Muse, revealed herself to him, jesting and playing with him as her favourite. Behind his banter there was often more earnest conviction than beneath the litany of a morose moralist. Heine longed for ideals which his mind could revere, and because he did not find them he scoffed at the false gods who allowed themselves to be worshipped. He has certainly given profound solutions to problems of history. He never sacrificed substance to form, when the former was of greater value than the latter. It is true that he often changed his opinions, but he did not play with his convictions. His religious views changed also; but his disposition remained as it had always been. He never wrote or acted against such convictions as he entertained for the time being. If for a time he was slave to the false philosophical theory, which makes a god of man, he afterwards acknowledged his error and derided it thoroughly. Heine was certainly no pattern of virtue, neither was he as great a sinner as his sharp pen and tongue might lead one to suppose. He never lost his profound and noble nature, nor his sense of the sublime; neither did he



X roll in the mud of sensuality, as he would have his readers believe. He painted himself blacker than he was. He had his share of that acute sensitiveness which sometimes falls to the lot of poets, actors, and preachers, and this morbid state was in Heine's case connected with severe nervous suffering. In his sensitive condition he wrote things of which he disapproved when he judged them soberly, but which he was ashamed to recall.

Heine, unlike Börne, had a sincere affection for his mother. Betty von Geldern was her name, and she came from a respected and, as it is said, an aristocratic Jewish family. This educated mother, to whom he owed his bent of mind, was of a religious character, and brought up her children in the knowledge of the Jewish faith. The religious differences which had, at an early date, alienated Börne from Judaism, were unknown to Heine, and in his youth he strictly avoided the transgression of Jewish customs. He did not indeed learn as much Hebrew as Börne, but because he imbibed with love the little that he did learn, that little never left him, nor did he forget it later in life, whilst Börne wiped Hebrew entirely from his memory. Heine's love of Judaism, which, in spite of his mockery, was never quite dead, and especially his deep sympathy with it, sprang from the fond memories of his youth, which remained with him, like sweet and pleasing dreams. His soul was also filled with the charm of that true Jewish family life, which enabled him to appreciate what men call virtue and happiness.

He had a warm though vague attachment to Judaism and the Jewish race, on account of its pathetic history and sacred books, and he was forcibly impressed by the antiquity of Judaism and its continuity of existence, in spite of time and myriads of obstacles. Now and again Heine felt proud of belonging to this ancient aristocracy. He felt what he wrote at a more advanced age:—

"Now I perceive that the Greeks were only handsome youths, but the Jews were always men, powerful, stubborn men, not only in days of yore, but even in the present day, in spite of eighteen centuries of persecution and misery. I have since learned to know them better, and to value them more highly, and if the pride of one's descent were not always a foolish contradiction, I might feel proud of the fact that my progenitors were members of the noble house of Israel, that I am a descendant of those martyrs who have given a God and morality to the world, and who have combated and suffered on all the battle-fields of thought."

This consciousness slumbered gently in him from his youth onwards. But he did not actually realise his position to Judaism. The circle of Jews, in whom solidity, high virtue, and morality were still to be found, repelled him by their unæsthetic exterior and religious ceremonies, which he did not understand. He felt his sense of beauty wounded by the repulsive exterior of Judaism and its representatives. His eye could not penetrate through ugly veils. The circle of more refined Jews, which while in early manhood he joined in Berlin, consisted of older men, namely, Friedländer, Ben-David, Jacobson, and of some young men who did not cherish Judaism so deeply as to make willing sacrifices for their faith. And in the semi-Jewish circle which he frequented during his stay in Berlin, as also in that of Rahel von Varnhagen, who was at this time already baptised, he everywhere beheld a thorough contempt for Jews and Judaism, and an enthusiastic, romantic predilection for Christianity.

But Heine, unlike Börne, had too independent a judgment to be lured into an idolatrous worship of the thoughts of his day. Sophistry could not sever his clinging to Judaism. On the contrary, Heine joined the society of several youths and young men whose object was to promote an increased culture among the Jews, and as one of its members, he tacitly vowed that he would not suffer himself to be baptised for the sake of a government appointment. The impulse by which he and the

other members were actuated was no doubt rather vague; but there was at any rate on his part a desire to work for the improvement of his brethren. He undertook to aid in strengthening the society and in widening its scope. Heine's opinion even of the much-despised Polish Jews was not utterly unfavourable, and they found a champion in him.

Heine would have espoused the cause of Judaism with heart and soul, if Judaism itself, *i.e.*, its sons, had developed powers of mind and character, if freshness of youth and attractive charms had been connected with the dignity of its old age, its purport and calling, and if it could have inspired respect in the educated world. In his impatience he wished to see Judaism, like the legendary Messiah who was chained down at Rome, suddenly divest itself of its ragged cloak, its leprous skin, throw off its aspect of servitude and be transformed into a richly endowed, bright and commanding youth. The process of rejuvenescence seemed to him too slow, the means employed too petty, the whole bearing of those who wished to be engaged in the process, especially their coquetry with the dominant Church, seemed to him to be weak, apish and undignified.

Israel lacks energy. Chiropodists (David Friedländer and Co.) have sought to heal the body of Judaism of its fatal excrescences, and on account of their unskilfulness and intense dullness, Israel must bleed to exhaustion. Would that the deception might soon cease to exist, for its most glorious characteristics consist only of impotency, privation of strength, one-sided denial. . . . We have no more the courage to wear a beard, to fast, to hate, and tolerate, and through hatred to be patient. This is the motive of our reformation. Those who have received their enlightenment and education from comedians wish to give Judaism new decorations and new scenes, and the prompter is to wear white bands instead of a beard. They wish to pour the ocean into a neat little hand-basin. . . . Others desire evangelical Christianity under Jewish names. . . . Even I do not possess the strength of mind (he frankly confessed) to wear a beard, and to allow myself to be called, "dirty Jew."

We see clearly his attachment to Judaism in the case of his pardonable hatred towards the oppressor



and despiser of his race, towards the enemy who had received his salvation from that very Judaism, which he imprisoned and at which he spat. In feeling the renewed pain of old wounds, which had been inflicted upon the Jews by the heathen and by Christian Rome, what a world of boiling anger did Heine compress into the word Edom! Thus he jeered in a poem to Edom:—

“For a thousand years or longer  
We bear with each other in a brotherly way;  
Thou didst endure that I should breathe,  
I endured that thou shouldst rave.

“Sometimes, but on dark days only,  
Was thy mood a curious one,  
And thy pietistic claws  
Didst thou colour with my blood.

“Now our friendship waxeth stronger  
And daily increaseth in strength;  
For I myself began to rave,  
And become almost like to thee.”

Still greater was Heine's hatred towards those deserters, those traitors, those Jews who for the sake of personal gain turned their back upon their suffering brethren and went over to the enemy. Heine could not believe that a Jew ever became baptised from earnest conviction; baptism was in his opinion a self-delusion, if not entirely a swindle. The Gospel, which had been preached in vain to the poor of Judæa, now as he averred, found a market among the rich. Heine gave vent to this hatred in his dramatic poem “Almansor” (completed in 1823). But he found it unsuitable to introduce the characters as Jews, to tell in glowing verses of their affliction and the contempt in which they were held; and he therefore put these verses into the mouths of the Mussulmans of Granada, who through devilish malice were experiencing the same cruel fate as the Jews, and who felt a yawning chasm in their hearts at having been forced to embrace Christianity. It is unmistakeable that these verses

breathe of Jewish suffering. The Jewish poet, however, incurred bitter enmity by this drama.

A proof of Heine's warm attachment to his race is seen in the earnest way in which he proceeded to glorify many vexatious traits of theirs. The entralling psalm, which had once been sung by a Hebrew bard at Babel's waters, was constantly in his mind.

" May my tongue cleave painfully  
To my gums, and my right hand  
Wither, if ever  
I forget thee, O Jerusalem."

For affronts passed upon him it was his intention to take thorough revenge on his German-Christian enemies, and to hold up a mirror to them in a Jewish novel. In the "Rabbi of Bacharach" he described vividly, as only he could, the sad and glorious scenes of Jewish history, and to this end he proceeded carefully to study the Jewish chronicles, as he wished to keep strictly to history. His imagination only illuminated facts, but did not invent them, there being material enough at his disposal. Heine did not hesitate to ransack the old petty publications of the "Schund" (Jewish Curiosities), "this memorial of the Frankfort Jew-hatred"; and he succeeded in threshing grains even out of chaff and straw. "The spirit of Jewish history reveals itself more and more to me, and the pursuit of it will no doubt prove useful to me in the future." In the course of Jewish history, stamped as it is with acts of heroism and of sacrifice, he beheld a connection between the plans of Providence: "In the same year in which the Jews were expelled from Spain the new land of religious liberty was discovered." The golden period of mediæval Jewish history—the history of the Spanish Jews—had the greatest charm for him. In the foreground of this stage he introduced proud Jews, who

would not bow their necks beneath the yoke of German restrictions and canonical arrogance, and who professed their religion with conscientiousness; but since this epoch was not well known at that time, Heine longed in vain for better sources, for there was no spring at which he could quench his thirst. Instead of facts, those to whom he applied could only hand him thrashed straw. But Heine allowed no difficulty to prevent his collecting interesting historical materials for his novel; this production was not to be the child of his hate, but of his love. He pictures himself absolutely in it: "Since it proceeds from love, it will be an immortal book, an ever-burning lamp in the palace of God—no fitful theatrical light."

Heine's romance was indeed grandly conceived. The scene of action was laid in Germany, but the foreground of the picture treated of the history of the Jews of Spain, their expulsion, and enforced baptism.

However, just about the time when Heine was earnestly engaged in the study of Judaism, and appeared to be enthusiastic for its history, and to hate Christianity most fiercely, he quietly passed over to the Christian fold (June 28th, 1825), and assumed the baptismal name of Christian Johann Heinrich. He had fought for a long time against this temptation. He expressed his opinion upon the question plainly:—

"Not one of my family is opposed to it except myself. This act might, perhaps, bear the significance to me, that through it I could devote myself the better to secure full privileges for my unhappy co-religionists. But I should consider it as a blot upon my dignity and honour, if I were to become baptised in order to obtain a post in Prussia—in dear Prussia! . . . Through annoyance, nevertheless, I may be induced to become a Catholic, and thus throw myself away."

In spite of this declaration he became a convert, and more with the purpose of obtaining a position in Prussia than in order to escape from his



humiliating dependence upon his uncle. In his diary he composed the following verses upon the subject:—

“And unto the cross now bendest thou low,  
To the cross that erstwhile thou didst despise ;  
Which but a few short weeks ago  
Seemed so vile, in thy scornful eyes.”

X Shortly afterwards (July 20th, 1825) he passed his examination as a lawyer. He still pursued phantoms, and wasted his reputation. He was unable to procure employment, and therefore could not dispense with his uncle's support. Ashamed like a girl who has been guilty of some fault, Heine communicated the fact of his conversion in allegorical language to his bosom friend Moser.

“A young Spanish Jew, at heart a Jew, but who, owing to the demands of pleasure, had abjured his faith, corresponded with the youthful Judah Abrabanel, and sent him a poem translated from the Moorish. Perhaps he was loth to address lines to his friend in plain terms concerning his not very creditable performance ; but still he sends the poem. Do not meditate at all about it.”

Through his apostasy, Heine became only the more embittered against Christianity, as though it had actually led him into faithlessness, to forget his honour, and abandon his former self. “I assure you,” he wrote to his intimate friend, “if the law had permitted the stealing of silver spoons I should not have been baptised.” When about the same time, Edward Gans, the leader of young Israel, and founder and an active worker in the Society of Culture, also embraced Christianity, Heine could not forgive him, for he had not been compelled by poverty to take such a step. Heine was yet more indignant when he was informed that Gans had induced other weak-minded Jews to forsake their belief.

“If he does it out of conviction, he is a fool ; if he does it out of hypocrisy, he is a rascal.”

It also vexed him that his opponents would not

forget his Jewish origin, but, as in the case of Börne, reminded him of it at every opportunity. In order to appease his conscientious scruples in some way, he continued to work at the romance, "The Rabbi of Bacharach." Through its medium he desired to make known his secret attachment to the Jews, and he published it in spite of the advice of his friend Moser, who was not blind to the glaring contradiction between thought and act, and the enmity he must necessarily draw down upon himself.

Heine was not, however, so constituted as to allow remorse to trouble him for any length of time. Once having turned his back upon Judaism, he sought to banish all thought of it from his mind. His pleasure-seeking mode of life after his conversion was only a means to this end. Heine ingeniously laboured to cast slurs on the Jews and Judaism, and thus to justify himself. From this impulse originated his hostile sallies against Judaism—that it is for instance, "no religion, but a misfortune." Afterwards, he sought to minimise the differences between Judaism and Christianity by drawing a very faint line of demarcation; he characterised both faiths as self-torturing, monkish, and Nazarite; he vilified them equally, and in separating from both, acknowledged a Hellenistic religion of the "revival of the flesh." Nevertheless, it may be said that, in his bright moments, his old love of Judaism revived, and he again showed his thoughtful conception of it. It annoyed Heine that Shakespeare should be reckoned among the Jew-baiters because he had created "Shylock," and he employed his brilliant eloquence to remove this blemish from the Jews and from Shakespeare.

"Did Shakespeare aim at depicting a Jewess in Jessica? Certainly not. He portrayed only a daughter of Eve, one of those pretty birds who, as soon as they are fledged, flutter forth from the home-

nest to their lovers. . . . In Jessica there is especially noticeable a certain timid shame which she cannot overcome in donning male garments. In this trait one may, perhaps, recognise the peculiar modesty, characteristic of her race, which endows its daughters with such a marvellous charm. The chastity of the Jews is probably the consequence of the aversion which they felt against Oriental sensuality of old and the immoral worship among their neighbours—the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians—which once existed in the most licentious form, and has continued unchanged to the present day. The Jews are a chaste, abstemious, so to speak, an abstract people, and in purity of morals, approach the German nations. . . . The Greeks and Romans gained their inspiration from the soil . . . the later Northern immigrants depended upon the person of their chieftains . . . whilst the Jews from ancient times were attached to the law, to abstract thoughts, and like our modern cosmopolitan Republicans . . . liberty and equality were their religion.”

When advanced in years, and after a severe nervous affliction had cleared the mirror of his thoughts, Heine became conscious of the superiority of a morality based upon piety, rather than that derived from beauty, and returned with his whole heart to the love of his youth and to his reverence for Judaism. His “Confessions” (1853-54) are inspired hymns to Jewish history and the Jewish people, and it is quite apparent that they are sincere. This poet was always enthusiastic on behalf of the Bible.

“The Jews may console themselves for the loss of Jerusalem and the Ark of the Covenant; this loss is but trifling when compared with the Bible, that indestructible treasure which they have saved . . . I owe the re-awakening of my religious feelings to that Holy Book (the Bible), and it has become for me equally the source of salvation and the object of my most ardent admiration . . . I think I may flatter myself that I can better comprehend the character of Moses in the first portion of the sacred book (of the Old Testament). This grand figure has attracted me in no slight degree. What a giant form! How small Sinai appears when Moses stands upon it! This mountain is only the pedestal upon which the feet of the man stand, whose head reaches up to the heavens, where he speaks with God . . . Previously I had felt no especial affection for Moses, probably because the Hellenic spirit was paramount in me, and I could not pardon the legislator of the Jews his hatred against all painting and sculpture. I did not see that, notwithstanding his hostility to art, Moses was indeed a great artist, and possessed the true artistic spirit! But this very spirit was directed by him, as by his Egyptian compatriots, to colossal and indestructible undertakings . . . He built human Pyramids, carved out human Obelisks; he took a poor shepherd



family and created a nation from it, a great, eternal, holy people, a people of God, destined to outlive the centuries, and to serve as a pattern to all other nations, even as a prototype to the whole of mankind: he created Israel . . . . Just as I spoke of the artist, so also I have not always spoken with sufficient respect of his work, the Jews. . . . . The history of the Middle Ages, and even of other times, seldom inscribed in its annals the names of these knights filled with the holy spirit, because they usually fought with closed visor. The deeds of the Jews, as well as their peculiar character, are likewise little known to the world. One thinks one knows them, because their beards are visible, but nothing else has come to view; and now, as in the Middle Ages, they are a profound mystery, which may perhaps be revealed on the day of which the prophet speaks. . . . .

“Yes, to those Jews to whom the world owes its God, it also owes His Word, the Bible; they have saved it from the wreck of the Roman Empire, and in the frantic scramble of invading nations they preserved the precious book, until Protestantism sought it out from amongst them, translated the discovered work into the vernacular, and disseminated it throughout the whole world. . . . . In the North of Europe and America, the influence of Palestine has grown to be so great, that one can fancy oneself transplanted into the midst of Jews. . . . . I will not speak of most of the new communities of the United States where the life of the Old Testament is pedantically imitated . . . . . but just as the caricature of it will not disappear, so the real, imperishable and true portion, namely, the morality of ancient Judaism, will also flourish in those countries as luxuriantly as in former days on the banks of the Jordan and upon the heights of Lebanon. No palms are needed for a man to be good; and to be good is better than to be beautiful. . . . . Judæa has always appeared to me as a piece of the West that has lost itself in the East. In fact, with its spiritual belief, its severe, pure, almost ascetic morals, its abstract inner life, this land and its people have ever formed a remarkable contrast to the surrounding countries and their inhabitants, who pay homage to the most licentious and infamous cults of Nature, and dissipate their existence in bacchanalian orgies. Israel in its piety sat beneath its fig-tree and sang the praise of the invisible God, and practised virtue and justice; whilst in the temples of Babylon, Nineveh, Sidon and Tyre, sanguinary and immoral rites were celebrated, the description of which even now strikes us with horror. When one thinks of their surroundings, this early greatness of Israel cannot be sufficiently admired. Of Israel's love of liberty, whilst slavery was justified not alone in its immediate vicinity but by all the nations of antiquity, even by philosophers—of this I would rather not speak, in order to avoid compromising the Bible and our present rulers. . . . . Instead of wrestling with the impossible, instead of foolishly decreeing the abolition of property, Moses strove to render it a moral act; he endeavoured to bring the possession of property into harmony with morality, with true rational justice, and this he effected by the institution of the year of Jubilee, when all alienated hereditary property, which amongst an agricultural people consisted of land, reverted to the original owners, in precisely the same condition as it had been allotted. This ordinance offers a most decided contrast to the law of prescription among the Romans. . . . . Moses did not wish to destroy the holding of property; his plan was that every one should possess some land, that no one should become a slave, with slavish

propensities, through poverty, for freedom was the ultimate aim of the great emancipator, and this desire breathes through all his laws dealing with pauperism. He detested slavery to a degree. . . . . If a slave, however, who was freed by law, refused to leave the house of his master, Moses commanded that the incorrigible rascal should be nailed by his ear to the door-post of his master's house. . . . . O Moses, our teacher, Moshe Rabbenu, the exalted enemy of serfdom, I pray thee furnish me with hammer and nails, that I may nail our willing slaves in their liveries of black and red and gold, by their long ears firmly to the Brandenburg Gate."

The spirit of the Jewish laws and of Jewish history had indeed come upon this erratic son of Israel, and revealed to him what few of his predecessors had thoroughly grasped and none had so luminously delineated. Heine appreciated equally the profound wisdom displayed in the laws and the intellectual contests in the millennia of Jewish history, as also the precious ore of poetry, which had streamed forth from the greatest Jewish poets of the Middle Ages. Scarcely had Michael Sachs, the preacher, with his Psalmist soul and his prophetic speech, unveiled the hidden beauties of the "religious poetry of the Jews in Spain," and more especially the almost forgotten glory of the poet Judah Halevi Alhassan, than Heine, deeply moved, set up a memorial to this singer and brother in race and art. With his magic wand he invoked the shade of Judah Halevi from the grave, and depicted him in his complete ideality of form and the full glow of his inspiration.

Until his last breath, the struggle continued within Heine's breast between the two great principles in the construction of the world's history, the pure morality of Judaism and the symmetrical beauty of Hellenism, both of which he revered, but was unable to reconcile:—

"The contrasts are boldly paired,  
The love of pleasure in the Greek, and the thought of God in the  
Judæan,

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*            \*

Oh! this conflict will never end,  
The true must always contend with the beautiful."

He suspected that the harmonious intermingling of the two elements was the task of European civilisation; but he was unable to effect it himself. Owing to this conflict his aberrations arose, and also his impulse in striving to dominate them by ridicule, and thus prevent their over-mastering him.

The Jewish world is greatly indebted to its two apostate sons, Börne and Heine. They did not indeed destroy all German anti-Jewish feeling, but they at least subdued it. Referring to the absurd cry of "Hep, hep," Heine once said, "This can never occur again as long as the Press is a weapon, and there are two Jews who possess the power of writing in German, the one being myself, the other Börne." His prediction was partially fulfilled, for, since the appearance of these two, such fierce outbreaks have not recurred against the Jews. Germany has not produced any more talented, more artistic, more refined writers than these two Jews.

Young Germany, which originated the present state of culture, and created the Year of Liberation of 1848, is the offspring of these two Jewish parents. Those who wished to decry the Jews, libel them, or spy upon them, were perfectly correct when they designated the leaders of young Germany as Jews, because without the influence of their spirit the struggles for freedom would not have been so energetically carried on. Jew-haters thought they were inflicting a disgrace on the fair-haired warriors in calling them Jews, whilst actually they only bestowed honour upon them. But the list of Börne's and Heine's services to Germany is not yet exhausted. They induced the French to respect the reliable and essential character of the German spirit. Börne and Heine were the first to bring France and Germany into closer proximity, to unite German depth of thought with that elegance of diction which is possessed by the French. They first dispelled the clouds which separated these two nations, causing



the French people to ascend the hill of prejudice and the Germans to descend. Here they could meet each other half-way, and freed from antagonistic prejudices, and from their oppressors, they might stretch forth their hands in brotherly union. This Messianic time, when it arrives, will have been prepared by two Jews, as the result of their national mission.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### REFORM AND YOUNG ISRAEL.

Segregation of the Jews—Its Results—Secession and Obstinate Conservatism — Israel Jacobson — His Reforms — The Hamburg Reform Temple Union—Gotthold Solomon—Decay of Rabbinical Authority — Eleazar Libermann—Aaron Chorin — Lazarus Riesser—Party Strife—Isaac Bernays—His Writings—Bernays in Hamburg—Mannheimer—His Congregation in Vienna—Berlin Society of Culture—Edward Gans—His Baptism—Collapse of the “Society of Culture.”

1818—1830.

THE advance of the Jews in Germany, had been completed in an amazingly short time, when we contrast the reticence of Mendelssohn, who scarcely ever touched upon the religious and political conditions in Christendom, with the boldness of Börne and Heine, who displayed it in its naked form. Mark the progress that had been made in France! Here the Jews had become men, dauntlessly encountering every opponent, and ready to avenge with the sword any insulting remarks on their origin. Judaism, however, was less rapid in casting off its servile form than were its followers. For nearly two thousand years it had struggled for existence against every new people and every new tendency which appeared on the stage of history. With Greeks and Romans, Parthians and Neo-Persians, Goths and Slavonic tribes, with Arabs and mediæval knights in armour, with monks of every order and fanatic Lutherans, it had maintained an ever-recurring contest, and had of necessity become covered with disfiguring scars

and foul dust. In order to defend itself against the combined assaults of so many hostile powers and during so long a period, Judaism had been compelled to surround itself with an impenetrable coat of mail, to isolate itself completely, or withdraw into fixed habitations to which every access was carefully barricaded. So accustomed had the Jews become to their heavy armour, that it seemed to have grown into their very being, and could not be discarded as long as new battles were imminent. Concentrated within itself, and excluded from the external world, especially since the expulsion of its members from Spain and Portugal, and their simultaneous banishment from many German districts, Judaism had enwrapped itself in its own dream-land. It admitted magical formulas into its thoughts and fancies, to distract the minds of its adherents from pangs of torture, so that they might endure these with greater ease, or forget them entirely. Suddenly its sons were awakened from their dreams by the dazzling sunlight, and beheld a real world on which they gazed in astonishment and as strangers. At first they closed their eyes the tighter, in order to retain the pleasant dream-pictures. In this new age, and in their new conditions, they could not at once find their proper level, and feared that the altered state of affairs was a mere stratagem, or a novel method of warfare in a different guise, which their ancient enemies had directed against Judaism.

During its long journey through the world, and its acquaintance with many nations, Judaism, in spite of its exclusiveness, admitted various perverse ideas, which became so incorporated and so thoroughly a part of itself, as if derived from the original stock. Memory had indeed been weakened through persecution and martyrdom; the powers of thought had also suffered somewhat through daily increasing afflictions. At first the people could not collect



themselves, nor employ tests to distinguish and remove foreign and unnecessary elements from native and essential parts. Among the Jews in Germany, England and France, and through the admission of the uncultivated Polish system, Judaism now presented a barbarous aspect, and among the Portuguese and Italian Jews, owing to Isaac Lurya and Chajim Vital, it had assumed a Kabbalistic form. This disfigurement of Judaism in its externals, together with the confusion existing in Polish and German communities, affected every event in religious life, Divine Service, sermons, marriages, interments—in short every ceremonial. The official representatives and expounders of Judaism, the Rabbis and ministers of Divine Service, adhered most strictly to the repulsive established form, being either semi-barbarians or visionaries. The foreign additions and excrescences, the signs of decay that attached itself to the original trunk, were regarded by these leaders of Judaism as ancient and trustworthy elements. Time had not yet matured a man who, with a delicate perception of the inner kernel of Judaism (as contained in the Bible and the Talmud), by his extended range of vision and clear insight, could recognise the abuses that had accumulated in the long vicissitudes of time, and sever them from the essential parts. To remove these objectionable excrescences gradually, and with a gentle hand, without offending the minds of people, required profound knowledge. A necessary internal reform, not prompted by external considerations, had already been suggested several centuries earlier by far-sighted men; but the modern generation knew nothing of this. Neither was there any adequate representative body of the Jewish world. There certainly existed organisations possessing a sort of official character and authority, or which could easily have obtained it,

namely, the French Synhedrion and the Consistories. But the chiefs, David Sinzheim and Abraham di Cologna, had not the needful discernment for accomplishing the ennoblement and rejuvenescence of Judaism. Sinzheim was in reality an orthodox Talmudist, and di Cologna only an interesting preacher. For this much-needed reform, not of the religion itself—for neither the leaders nor individual adherents had lost any degree of morality through the deterioration of Judaism—but in order to beautify the exterior and remove excrescences, the right men who would undertake and promote it, were wanting. No men being forthcoming, time effected the changes, and also brought about quarrels and contentions. It was to be no easy work for Judaism to cast its old slough.

The changes in Judaism itself, like other changes, began in Germany. To the German Jews (because Mendelssohn had come from their midst) a task was allotted similar to that which had been achieved in earlier times by the Alexandrian and Spanish, and in part also by the Provençal Jews, that of reconciling Judaism with culture. But when these efforts commenced, the situation was already in great confusion, and the method on which they were conducted only intensified the difficulties. Owing to the struggles of the German Jews to secure civil emancipation, every step towards freedom, for a time was only accomplished after the most strenuous exertions, each advance being met with scorn and neglect. At a period when men were continually hurled back into their humiliated condition and reminded of their despised state, two equally unpleasant phenomena manifested themselves. Some few who were improved by culture and education swam with the stream, estranged themselves from Judaism, disowned all connection with its official acts, and despised it as the obstacle to civil or social progress. To them Judaism appeared

as a mummy, a petrification or a spectre, which restlessly and aimlessly flitted through centuries, a picture of grief beyond help. Only a few of the educated class were clear-sighted enough, like Heine in his bright moments, and when not led astray, to recognise in this mummy a body only apparently dead, which would one day arise from its shroud and engage in combat with its enemies. On the other hand, the majority of the Jews, who still bore in their hearts a deep love for this wrinkled mother of all religions, clung to those unessential forms to which from youth they had been accustomed, because they perceived the treachery of the opposite party, and did not wish to be classed amongst the betrayers of Judaism. "They loved the stones and treasured the dust." Theirs was no longer the harmless piety of bygone days which had no counterpart, but an active passionate feeling. The representatives of the old school became anxious and suspicious of the growing weakness in religious feeling, the loosening of all bonds of union, and the symptoms of apostasy and contempt for their peculiar origin which were apparent. Judaism seemed like a gigantic structure which was supported only at the bases; these had to bear and support each other and the whole. They dreaded a general downfall of this edifice when the supports which upheld it should become loose. They had no confidence in the lasting power of that structure, though they were ready to sacrifice their lives for its maintenance. They scouted all idea of surrendering the wretched jargon which, regardless of all rules, was employed in the ritual as a part of their hideous and disorderly system. Every sign of yielding, or any departure from the old order, appeared to them as an act of treachery to Judaism.

It seemed impossible to find a means of uniting these opposites. Nevertheless, an attempt was



made to do so, but in a rough and unskilful manner, the result being that the advance of Judaism became retarded for a considerable time. The first man to undertake some sort of reform was Israel Jacobson. He was especially fitted for the leadership of a new party by his attachment to his faith, his admiration for beauty and external brilliancy, his activity, wealth, and his high position. Immediately after the Westphalian Consistory had been appointed, and he had been placed at its head, he came forward with innovations of a two-fold nature. From the public service in the synagogue, which was connected with the newly-erected school for boys in Cassel, he removed all objectionable and noisy features, especially the sing-song reading so much in use. Jacobson naturally insisted upon the delivery of sermons in German. He further introduced new forms and methods borrowed from the Church, such as German as well as Hebrew prayers, insipid German songs together with psalms pregnant with thought, and the ceremony of confession of faith (Confirmation) for boys and girls when arrived at riper years—an idea that has no meaning in Judaism.

Jacobson exercised such power over his associates in the Westphalian Consistory, that they unresistingly accepted these innovations. He then proceeded to introduce his reforms into all the communities of Westphalia, with the threat that he would close such synagogues, as refused to adopt his regulations. This compulsion however aroused the feelings of the orthodox party; the introduction of the German language into their Divine Service being particularly objectionable to the majority. A Rabbi otherwise of mild temperament, Samuel Eger of Brunswick (died 1842), had the courage to protest against the arbitrary conduct of the President of the Consistory. He prophetically expressed

his conviction, that by employing German prayers and hymns, the Hebrew language would fall into disuse and finally die out, and that the bond uniting the Jews dispersed throughout the world would thereby be relaxed. Jacobson appears to have paid no heed to these warnings and signs of opposition. The dissatisfied Jews therefore determined to make complaints about him and his new schemes to King Jerome, and the king reprimanded him for his autocratic attacks upon matters of conscience and his ardour for reform.

The greatness of Jacobson ended with the speedy downfall of the Westphalian kingdom. Having moved to Berlin (1815), he set up a hall for prayer in his house, although he had formerly been opposed to private synagogues, and introduced his reformed service with German prayers, songs, and a choir, but at first there was no room for an organ. Afterwards Jacob Beer, the banker, the father of Meyer Beer, provided a large chamber (1817), where an organ was also used. After the victory of the Germans over Napoleon, it became the fashion to be religious, and also infected those Jews who had previously not experienced the slightest necessity for devotional exercises, and had been quite indifferent to religious ceremonial. Those who had no regard for Judaism, but only a certain amount of religious sentimentality, attended the services of Jacobson, in order to "edify themselves," and "to cultivate devout conduct," as the new phrases ran. The "Society of Friends" also furnished members. This was the origin of a Reform party, a petty congregation within the community, which however, as could be easily foreseen, owing to the energy displayed at the commencement and the repulsive form of the ordinary Divine Service, had a future before it. The great attraction in the new form of service was the German sermon, which Jacobson usually delivered. His addresses exercised great

power, because the so-called "homiletic discourses" of the Rabbis and the Polish or Moravian wandering preachers, were usually tasteless and unattractive.

Meanwhile the prayer hall in Berlin, owing to complaints made by some of the orthodox party, was closed by the Prussian Government. The reigning King of Prussia, Frederick William III., was averse to all innovations, even in Jewish circles, and hated them as if they were revolutionary plots. A young preacher from the school of Jacobson thereupon betook himself to Hamburg, where he had been invited to conduct a free school, that had been established by certain rich Jews. Here he set on foot the plan of erecting a reform temple on the model of Jacobson's.

This young minister, Kley, had brought with him from Jacobson's synagogue a complete scheme, which included German hymns and prayers, sermons, and the organ. He composed a so-called "religious song-book," in imitation of the Protestant liturgy, an empty and feeble work, suited only to a childish race, and containing no psalms, which are the pattern sources of religious devotion. There were also several men in Hamburg who, although they approved of modern ideas, were yet unwilling to break entirely with Judaism and its past, and who decidedly objected to omit the use of Hebrew in their prayers. The chiefs of this movement were M. I. Bresselau, who possessed a good Hebrew style, and Sæckel Fraenkel (died in Hamburg, 1833), likewise a Hebrew scholar, who had retranslated several of the Apocryphal books into the sacred language. These two men compiled a selection from the Hebrew prayers already in use, in order to amalgamate them with the newly-adopted German songs and prayers, a discordant medley in contents and form, which somewhat called to mind a friendly arbitration among con-



tending parties. About fifty families joined, and thus there arose the Reform Temple Union in Hamburg. This mixed production was ushered into the world without love and enthusiasm. Its promoters were so lacking in resources, that the anniversary of the battle of Leipzig was chosen for the day of the consecration of the Temple (October 18th, 1818). The preacher Kley, in order to have ample material on which he could discourse, treated of the German war of freedom, which had caused the Jews in Germany to retrograde rather than to advance. Young maidens, in order to create an effect, together with the young men, sang hymns at the consecration of the Temple, and this gave rise to great offence. Kley could not have kept the Temple community together for long had not the Templars, as they were called, found an efficient preacher in Gotthold Solomon, of Dessau (died 1862), who was well acquainted with Biblical and Jewish literature, and knew how to conceal the bareness of the new movement. But in the same way as he supplied the Temple with Protestant attributes, he also, owing to his conceit and ostentation, endowed it with objectionable characteristics. With Solomon the influence of the preacher among the German Jews commenced; the pulpit took the place of the school, and from it there often resounded the hollow phrases which conceal men's thoughts, or the lack of them. The Temple Union had officially rejected all hope of the coming of the Messiah, without exactly defining what position Judaism was to assume with reference to Christianity. Some of the zealous reformers already meditated a complete rupture, in order to avoid contributing to the communal funds.

Meanwhile the originators and leaders of the new system were filled with the delusive idea, which at first appeared justifiable, that the Temple, through its modern, attractive, and undisfigured form of service,

would reconcile to Judaism those who had been alienated from their faith, and bring them back to the fold. They hoped that the less stringent religious forms would overcome the dislike felt by worldly men against everything Jewish. In solitary instances the men who disowned Judaism were restrained from overstepping the threshold into the Church, but this offered no lasting strength. Nevertheless, the merits of the Hamburg Temple, commonplace as may have been its origin, are not to be underrated. At one stroke, but without much reflection, it banished the accumulations of centuries from the synagogue, swept away with youthful impetuosity the holy cobwebs which no one had ventured to touch, and awakened a taste for a well-regulated service, a love for decorous behaviour at Divine worship, and for order and simplicity. The injury inflicted on Judaism by aping foreign customs and indulging in floods of empty words, cannot be altogether attributed to the new order of things.

Naturally the establishment of the Hamburg Temple produced a split in the Jewish world. Hitherto there had only existed the "old-fashioned" and the "new-fashioned" people, as they termed each other, but no distinct sects possessing a banner, a pass-word and a confession of faith. The old-fashioned orthodox section did not constitute a definite party. For although the adherents of the past, who would not swerve one hair's breadth from former practices, were so numerous, that even in Hamburg they could suppress the innovators if they chose, they never acted in unity. Only the faint remonstrance of single individuals was heard lamenting the ruin of Judaism through its betrayers, and these oft-repeated wailings sounded sadly. The old party had no chiefs, no leaders; respect for the Rabbis had vanished in a single generation. The wretched disputes, for and against Jonathan Eibeschutz, and the satires of Hebrew writers of the

period of the Measim, had completely undermined the Rabbis' authority. In the larger German congregations the empty Rabbinical chairs were permitted to remain untenanted. They no longer wished to have Rabbis from Poland, because these could not speak the language of the land, and in Germany there were no great Rabbis of recognised authority. Berlin set the example, which was followed by the community of Prague, after the death of the wise Ezekiel Landau, by Hamburg after the retirement of the zealot Raphael Cohen, and by Frankfort-on-the-Maine after the death of the ultra-orthodox (Chassidic) Pinchas Hurwitz. Administrators of the Rabbinate took the place of Rabbis, half-hearted men, who were too dependent to have an opinion of their own, and too weak to oppose the demands of inconsiderate leaders of the community.

As a result of the disregard in which the Rabbis were held, the Talmudical schools fell into decay. Gifted Jewish youths, whose education had begun with the Talmud, preferred to attend the gymnasiums and universities, and learned to despise the Talmud and Judaism. The most famous Talmudical academies in Prague, Frankfort, Altona and Hamburg, Fürth, Metz and Halberstadt, which had possessed at least several hundred pupils (Bachurim), gradually became empty. This desolation also spread to Poland, as the Talmudical pupils no longer had any hope of finding employment in Germany and France. They made their way to Germany, with the intention of studying science (Chochmot), or if they remained at home they devoted themselves to the ensnaring mysticism of Neo-Chassidism. There were but four Rabbis of the younger generation who, on account of their profound knowledge of the Talmud and their simple patriarchal character, enjoyed widespread authority; these were Mordecai Benet, in Nicolsburg, Jacob Lissa, Akiba Eger, and his son-in-law, Moses



Sofer, of Frankfort-on-the-Maine. These four Rabbis, through their mode of teaching, kept alive the zeal for Talmudical study. Akiba Eger, owing to his astoundingly ingenious mind and high virtues—among which modesty was predominant—enjoyed almost divine reverence from thousands of the pupils who came from his academies in Friedland and Posen. He was a quiet man, who never took the initiative and was averse to noisy excesses. Moses Sofer, on the other hand, was a fanatical zealot and an active heretic-hunter. He possessed courage and determination, knew no considerations, and might have been a useful partisan in action. But like his allies, he was at too great a distance from the scene of action, to be able to aid in the contest, or even to set up a standard. The Rabbis had not the slightest conception of the new tendency which the times and the Jews had developed, and were entirely ignorant of the importance of the cause which they represented. They did not know the enemy who attacked them, or despised him too much to fear any danger. If a serious question or a critical situation arose, they were at a loss what to do, and only employed their old rusty weapons, and damaged their own cause by revealing its weakness. This helplessness created an impression of feebleness and decrepitude. Thus the old orthodox party (as their opponents, borrowing the name from the Church phraseology, termed them), or conservatives, were without a head, without a banner or a plan, utterly without unanimity or discipline, and even devoid of the knowledge of their own strength. They especially lacked the indispensable power of eloquence, by which public opinion is influenced and ruled, and its follies and hollow emptiness are made apparent. Their utter want of education avenged itself bitterly upon the rigidly pious party.

On the other hand, the opposing section, and

ardent innovators, the party of Jacobson, possessed what was wanting in the others, a daring leader, unity, and especially a wealth of passwords and phrases, such as "spirit of the times, enlightenment," by which incautious persons were easily captivated. Their victory and ultimate success could be foreseen. They had confidence and the courage of youth, were bold, and not over particular as to the means employed. Jacobson, their chief, knew how to pursue and achieve an end, and how to utilise the means at his disposal. He saw that the Hamburg Temple would encounter difficulties, and would be condemned as heretical by the old Rabbis. Jacobson was in correspondence with the founder, and knew that the Senate, instigated by the orthodox party, as well as by the King of Prussia, would forbid the new schemes of the Temple. He also saw that many of the Hamburg Templars were too lukewarm to struggle against great difficulties. For this reason he strove to obtain in advance the ratification of the Temple ritual. Among the Rabbis of Germany he could find no voice of approval for the new order of service. He, therefore, connected himself—a fact which throws no favourable light upon the affair—with a reckless adventurer, who, as it appears, deceived him. Eleazar Libermann, an actor from Austria, became his apostle of reform. It suffices, in characterising the man, to note that he afterwards became baptised. At the instigation of the reformers, Libermann travelled in Austria. From him they learned that in Hungary and Italy there were Rabbis or would-be Rabbis, willing to pronounce a favourable opinion upon the new ritual. Jacobson addressed his enquiries to them, and his wishes were fulfilled. The first who allowed himself to be influenced by Libermann was Aaron Chorin (from Chorin), Rabbi in Arad, Hungary, a tedious talker, who possessed a super-

ficial varnish of culture and of mediocre Talmudical scholarship, and was capable of repeating similar absurdities in three dialects—in Hebrew, German, and the Jewish-German jargon. He lauded the new movement without expressing any particular judgment upon it. Two Italian pretended Rabbis also spoke in favour of the innovations. The testimonials of all these men—not one of whom was of much importance—went to show that the introduction of the organ was not against the Rabbinical law. Chorin alone produced proofs in favour of the reforms, as well as for German prayers. Libermann collated these testimonials, strengthened them by his own pretended learning, adding the falsehood that not only all the Rabbis of Leghorn, but even those of Jerusalem, had declared it to be permissible to use the organ in Jewish divine service. These testimonials, which were printed and scattered broadcast, were intended to exonerate the Hamburg Reform Temple from blame at its very birth, and to remove the blot of illegitimacy which, as was foreseen, the Rabbis of the old school would affix to it.

Whilst the reformers energetically tried to overcome every obstacle in advance, the conservatives remained idle, and allowed the dangers which threatened their convictions to gather unnoticed. As already observed, Hamburg had at this time no Rabbi at its head, but a College of three Rabbinical authorities (Dayanim), who were of little repute. Although these official representatives of Judaism had almost the entire Hamburg community to support them, they opposed the innovations without much effect. Shortly after the opening of the Temple, the College ordered a feebly-written proclamation to be read out in the synagogues (Oct. 26th, 1818) that the new prayer-book should not be used by any Israelite of pious sentiments, because contrary to ordinary usage, essential pas-



sages had been omitted or altered. But this declaration lost its effect, when the lay heads of the community—whose assistance in active proceedings had not been recognised by the administrators—revoked the order and rebuked the authors, because “they had been guilty of incompetence and intolerable presumption.” The lay heads, at the recommendation of the College, afterwards invited the leaders of the Temple (November 8th) to a meeting, and intimated to them that they should discontinue to use the prayer-book, as it did not agree with the ritual in vogue in all Jewish communities. The Templars, however, laughed scornfully at this demand.

The Temple Union further received moral support from an unexpected quarter, and one having great influence, even in Hamburg. Lazarus Riesser, the father of the indefatigable champion for the emancipation of the Jews in Germany, had always been reckoned amongst the old orthodox party. As the son-in-law of Rabbi Raphael Cohen and as his right hand, his whole being was absorbed in the Talmud. He had published a Hebrew “Life of Raphael Cohen,” in which he eulogised the author as well as his Rabbinical teachings, and declared himself as his faithful follower. How astonished, therefore, were the Hamburg Jews of both parties when a letter from Riesser suddenly appeared, entitled “To my co-religionists in Hamburg” (the beginning of 1819), which applauded the Temple innovations, and sharply rebuked the Rabbinical authorities who had opposed them! He straightway called these men “hypocrites and pseudo-holy persons,” who “nourished contentions in Israel, and barred the way to those sons desirous of returning to the favour of their father.” It appears that he wished to wreak a petty revenge upon the Rabbinical administrators of Hamburg, by whom he perhaps thought himself kept in the background.

The orthodox party in Hamburg, who imagined that no Rabbi in the whole of Europe would approve of the reforms, were bitterly disappointed; owing to the activity of Jacobson and Libermann, the Jewish public discovered that several Rabbis in various districts upheld them. The old Rabbis were so listless and indolent in the matter, that they had to be addressed twice on the subject, before they pronounced judgment against the Temple. In the first excitement the Hamburg Rabbis had unwisely condemned the innocent and commendable customs which were introduced into the Temple, such as the Portuguese pronunciation of Hebrew and the omission of the intoned reading from the Bible. In order to rectify these mistakes, they afterwards limited their complaints to three points—the abridgment of the prayers, especially with reference to the erasure of Messianic passages, prayers in German, and finally to the use of the organ. To this programme the agreement of numerous distinguished Rabbis and Rabbinical authorities was at length secured; these comprised four Germans (from Fürth, Mayence, Breslau and Hanau), five Italians (from Trieste, Modena, Padua, Mantua and Leghorn), three Prussian Poland (from Posen, Lissa and Rawitz), and two Moravians (from Nicols and Trietsch). Moses Sofer in Presburg, the German Rabbi in Amsterdam, and the French Chief Rabbi of the Consistory at Wintzenheim, also signed the document. They all declared the reforms in the Temple to be distinctly heterodox. The falsehoods of Libermann now became apparent as the Leghorn Rabbinate had not given its assent to the use of the organ. The would-be Rabbi of Leghorn, and Chorin of Arad, probably induced by compulsory arguments, revoked their former testimonials. The most zealous in their denunciations of the Temple were Sofer of Presburg and Benet of Nicolsburg,

who were furious at the slightest deviation from ancient usages. But the impression which these proceedings were intended to produce was not successful. They had been delayed too long, more than seven months having elapsed before sentence of heresy was promulgated; and in the meantime the Temple Union had become strengthened. Eighteen antagonistic Rabbinate (in all forty Rabbis), and the most eminent of all, the Central Consistory of France, had remained silent. The advocates of the protest asserted that more testimonials would be forthcoming; but this long-deferred statement was of no avail. The arguments adduced by the Rabbis against the Temple service were for the most part useless, some being even childish. The letter of the law spoke against them. The diversity of opinions among the Rabbinical authorities of various ages and countries, always made it possible to find reasons for and against any question.

This weakness was mercilessly exposed by one of the originators of the Hamburg reform, M. J. Bresselau. In a Hebrew letter (1819) written in a beautiful Hebrew style and with such skilful manipulation of Biblical verses, that the prophets and psalmists themselves might have been scourging the delusions of the obtuse Rabbis, Bresselau treated them partly as ignorant boys, partly as false prophets, and more especially as disturbers of the peace. Every sentence in this seemingly earnest but biting satirical epistle was like a dagger-thrust against the old perversions and their defenders. The reformers also obtained a reinforcement from Poland. The old-fashioned party, on the other hand, were unable to present a single Hebrew writer to defend their cause, or who could combat the enemy. Even the Hebrew style used by the approving Rabbis was rugged and coarse. The Dayanim of Hamburg, indeed, caused the testi-



monials to be in part translated into German—a ruse that betrayed the weakness of their cause—but the German version was not calculated to create a good impression. They therefore employed the services of Shalom Cohen, a turn-coat, who had formerly belonged to the ranks of the reformers. In short, the conservatives were unfortunate, because they were unskilful and incautious.

It also happened that the commencement of the quarrel concerning the Temple, took place in the year when the cry of “Hep, Hep!” was being raised, and Hamburg also participated in it. Owing to this circumstance, the wealthy and worldly Jews were restricted to the society of their own people, and took an active part in supporting the banner that had been unfurled. The Jewish merchants of Hamburg, members of the Temple Union, who were accustomed to attend the fair at Leipzig on the days of the chief festivals in the spring and autumn, joined some Berlin merchants of similar opinions, and established a branch synagogue (20th September, 1820). Meyerbeer composed the songs for the opening ceremony. They appointed a so-called fair-preacher (Messprediger), Jacob Auerbach, and from this gathering-place of Jews from various countries, the innovations spread to a wider circle. The Hamburg reforms were adopted in some parts; and in other communities, such as those of Carlsruhe, Königsberg and Breslau, where though the entire programme was not carried out, a similar one was introduced, and where the rite of Confirmation was more particularly brought into use.

The first attempt to set up an opposing party, so as to dam up the overflowing stream of reform, and enable it to pursue its course along a quiet bed, commenced on account of the Temple innovations. This opposing party was established by a man who had partially forsaken Rabbinical Juda-

ism, but who still strove to strengthen and vindicate it, under the correct impression that development must take place upon its own soil, with due regard to historical conditions, and on its own peculiar lines, and especially without aping foreign Church forms. Isaac Bernays (born at Mayence, 1792; died at Hamburg, 1849) was the man who intelligently opposed the prevailing flaccidity of semi-enlightened reform and thought. In South Germany, in contradistinction to North Germany (where formal tendencies did not rise above the narrow sphere of simple minds), a mystic and philosophical school had been established, which promoted visionary notions. In all things, both the smallest and greatest objects, in nature and history, in groups of things, numbers, colours and names, in a simple series of thoughts, mere germs of ideas, this philosophy beheld the shattered ruins of a gigantic mirror, reflecting the original thoughts in a magnified form. Isaac Bernays belonged to this school. To his vision Judaism in its literature and historical progress revealed itself half unveiled. Bernays' mind, with its overflowing wealth of thoughts, found in every phenomenon the harmonious connection and development of original thought, which permeated the events of the age and the progress of history, endowing all things with an organism which had existed from the beginning of creation to the most recent formation. Bernays was the first to recognise, in a much profounder manner than Mendelssohn, the importance of Judaism in the history of the world, and at a glance to take an accurate survey of the range of its literature. His fault was perhaps, that he was too rich in ideas, that therefore he sought out and discovered too much, and was not equal to the task of clothing his ideas in fitting form and language. From his superior altitude he looked with contemptuous sympathy upon the

poverty of thought amongst Jewish reformers, who desired to contract and confine the giant spirit of Judaism (of which they had no conception) within the narrow bounds of a catechism for large and small children. In his eyes the "followers of Friedländer" were the embodiment of insipidity and bigotry. They impressed Bernays with the idea of a rabble who dwelt in a temple of the Pyramids, but used it for the purposes of petty household requirements.

"They, the disciples of Mendelssohn, ashamed of their antiquity, like foundlings of the present day, prefer to overleap and transgress the unfashionable limits of the Law, instead of learning in the school of the education of their race, what God has brought about until the present day."

The train of thought by which Bernays reconstructed Judaism, in his own mind, from its original sources and history, is but little known to us. He preferred oral to written instruction, and was averse to put his thoughts to paper. The "Biblical Orient," which is ascribed to him, contains, so to speak, the design for the vestibule of a temple that should inspire reverence. This work, crude as it was in form, but distinguished for its depth and originality, starts with the idea, that to Judaism is allotted the task of bringing back to God men created in His image, and that the Jewish people was to serve as a type to mankind, showing how the lost likeness to God may be regained. The "Biblical Orient" therefore endeavoured to establish a more thorough comprehension of the Bible than had been effected by the Mendelssohnian school. They had merely regarded it from its poetical point of view, and had overlooked its deeper character, or rather had misunderstood the profound character of the Bible in which the collision between two philosophical aspects of existence are portrayed. Bernays, therefore, determined to dethrone this school, together with the



founder, from its imaginary pedestal, by showing that Mendelssohn himself, through his superficial treatment of Hebrew, had aided in weakening Judaism.

According to the opinion of Bernays, Hebrew culture differed from that of the heathen, and is intended to be a contrast. Idolatry has stamped itself in plastic symbolism, Judaism in ritual forms. Therefore that very aspect of Judaism which the reformers desired to abolish as unfitting and unworthy, should be preserved. Everything which in process of time had found its way into the history of the Jewish people and had become incorporated in it, according to Bernays, ought to have its place assigned as a necessary part to the whole, even including Talmudism and the Kabbala.

This book contains many immature and unpolished ideas, and much that borders on the ridiculous. But if by his work the author only succeeded in awakening the idea that Judaism had a task to perform in the history of the world, as an apostle to the nations, this alone should have procured for him a place of honour in the records of Jewish history. Not that he could claim this as a new discovery of his own, for the fundamental writings of Judaism plainly point to it. Among the prophets it is the essence of their communications. It has been verified by history, that European and Asiatic nations have been delivered from their darkness by the light that came from Judaism. But the accumulated sufferings of the Jews, and the servile form assumed by Judaism, had caused this fact to be so entirely forgotten, that its own sons had no remembrance of the fact. The merit of the man who again called this conception to mind is therefore of no mean degree.

The extraordinary talents and original ideas of Bernays directed the attention of Jewish society to him. Afterwards, it is true, he denied the authorship of the "Biblical Orient"; but if he did not

actually compose it, he might have done so, for it is flesh of his flesh, or spirit of his spirit.

The community of Hamburg, who sorely needed a power to withstand the Temple Union, in consequence of his renown chose Bernays for their spiritual guide. It was a good move on their part, and bore important results. The Rabbis of the old school were ignorant of the contest that was carried on between two justifiable principles, the preservation of Judaism in its original form, and the assimilation of the Jews to European culture. Their weapons had grown rusty and injured the owners more than their opponents. Fresh energies were therefore required in their cause, men cognisant of the wants of the age, who could utilise them for the honour and purification of Judaism. The appointment of Bernays to the Hamburg Rabbinate (November, 1821) created a stir: he was the first Rabbi versed in sciences. It was a sign of the times that he dispensed with the title of Rabbi and preferred to be called Chacham, as was customary among the Portuguese Jews: he did not wish the despised title of Rabbi to be a hindrance to his activity. True to his aversion for slavish imitation, he eschewed all clerical mummery, to which the reform preachers in the pulpit, with their fine robes and pantomimic action, attached great importance. Bernays did not claim to be the guardian of souls, but only the teacher of his congregation. He also delivered sermons, but the contents, form, and other details differed entirely from those introduced by the Jacobson school. Owing to his peculiar mode of thought, his addresses were not understood by the multitude; but thoughtful hearers at least conceded to him the merit of originality, which contrasted favourably with the dulness of the Temple preachers. When Heine, who at this time interested himself actively and practically for Judaism, was staying in Hamburg,

he was induced to hear Bernays' sermons, and to compare them with those of other men. Heine understood the method and form of his thoughts. And the opinion of the lyrical satirist ran as follows :

"I have heard Bernays preach . . . none of the Jews understand him, he desires nothing for himself, and will never play any other part ; but he is a more spirited man and has more life in him than Kley, Solomon, and Auerbach I. and II."

Bernays knew how to gain the respect of the community by unobtrusive actions, as also to obtain the adherence of rigidly pious Jews. Even their suspicious natures found nothing to blame in the religious conduct of the Chacham. The changes that he introduced, though they were reforms, met with approval and imitation in orthodox congregations. By his penetration and his great erudition he exercised a deep influence over the rising generation, to whom he opened up the noble treasures of Jewish literature which were then but little known. He thereby imbued his pupils with a spirit of attachment to Judaism. As already stated, he did not care for writing. If his courage had kept pace with his knowledge and wealth of ideas, his activity would have had greater influence on modern Jewish history.

In another quarter, an equally beneficent and elevating, though differently constituted personality, was also at work. This was Isaac Noah Mannheimer (born at Copenhagen, 1793 ; died at Vienna, 1864). He was originally a disciple of the school of Jacobson, and by softening the crudities, he caused the unpleasant alterations in the divine service to be avowedly received, and he struck the right note when making improvements. He may justly be considered as an incarnation of the nobility amongst the Jews, and was indeed every inch a man. In him the essential elements of ancient Jewish culture were harmoniously combined with the attractive forms of European civilisation, for his was a per-



fectly moulded nature. Gifted with good humour and wit, inspiration and discretion, leading an ideal life and possessing practical solidity, endowed with poetic talents and sober thought, with childlike tenderness and cutting satire, great eloquence and earnest vigour, a deep love of Judaism and a delight in modern ideas—these varied characteristics were combined in him in the happiest manner. His brilliant qualities, combined with his nobility of soul and disinterestedness, devotion to his convictions, and conscientiousness in all official duties, his quick perception, skilful tact, his aversion to vulgarity, combined with consideration for the vulgar—were observable at a glance. He attracted the noble-minded, and even filled unworthy people with respect, and thus lightened his own labours. Born and bred under the mild Danish Government, which at an early date had granted equal rights to Jews, and which no longer hampered or restricted their energies, Mannheimer from childhood learned to hold his head erect, to represent his co-religionists, and utter his convictions without fear, and this, too, in a country where a servile conception of the position of burgesses and peasants, and especially of the Jews, prevailed during a considerable time. Mannheimer did not possess any original ideas or a deep knowledge of the compass of Jewish literature; but he was powerfully swayed by his own convictions, which he aroused and disseminated, not hiding them away as buried treasures. This man of words and action was placed by the destiny of history in a situation, where his peculiar nature and special gifts could find scope, and ennoble wide circles of people. Everyone cognisant of the state of affairs then prevailing in Austria, and the extent to which the Austrian Jews have since progressed, must confess that Mannheimer was eminently fitted for his position in the Austrian capital (which formed a boundary-line between

semi-barbarous countries) in order to raise the Jews of those lands from moral degeneracy. This condition, which was due to the enlightened tyranny of Joseph II., and to the anti-Jewish feelings of his mother, and the harm which had been caused by the Herz Hombergs, the Peter Berrs, and the whole troop of so-called "Normal teachers" and official religious instructors, had now to be remedied.

A chief who, with a band of half-savage men, and in face of constant strife and danger, founds a colony, elevates it, and trains it to be a pattern to others, can claim no greater praise than Mannheimer deserved in founding the congregation of Vienna. The camp of Metternich and Francis I. tolerated no Jews within their domains; only a few rich families with their dependants were admitted as exceptions, and were tolerated under various extraordinary titles. These few favoured families had immigrated from various countries, were in no way connected, had no rights as a community, could not possess a synagogue, nor appoint a Rabbi; in short, in the eyes of the law almost everything was forbidden to them as a religious body. Nevertheless, certain adventurous persons amongst them desired to introduce a German order of service, founded on the model of the Hamburg Temple, and their efforts were alternately encouraged and frustrated by the Government. Whilst the more enlightened men in Vienna busied themselves with a plan for erecting a Temple, and secured the aid of Mannheimer as preacher (June, 1825), they were compelled, owing to the restrictive laws, to invent some insignificant title for him, so that he might be allowed to reside in Vienna.

Although Mannheimer was intimate with the actual destroyers of ancient Judaism, with David Friedländer, Jacobson, and the young enthusiasts, and had occasionally preached in the Reform synagogues of Berlin, Hamburg, and Leipzig, yet he

was not so strongly attached to the new system that he did not recognise its fundamental errors. His first and last word in his new sphere of action was "that no rupture should be caused among Jews of any class," no sectarianism should be encouraged, and that the old orthodox party should not be offended and repelled by daring movements, but should gradually be won over to the new forms. Actuated by these ideas, he arranged a suitable service for the Temple, which was not, however, in accordance with the wishes of the man who had promoted him to his office. Mannheimer avoided obnoxious innovations in the new synagogue, making the service dignified, and giving it new vigour by his impressive words, but he retained the Hebrew language, that strong bond of union, and, to the regret of his former brother reformers, dispensed with the organ and German hymns. Even more successfully than Isaac Bernays, did Isaac Mannheimer pave the way to the reconciliation of old and new ideas.

In his pulpit eloquence, which was acknowledged by those Jews and Christians, who were competent judges, to be of a high quality, his power of harmoniously combining two apparently hostile elements was also displayed. Mannheimer had discovered a noble treasure in Jewish literature, and profited richly by it. In the writings of the Talmud and Agada—a mine of thoughtful sayings, parables, riddles, interesting remarks, and witty play upon words—he made himself thoroughly at home, and discovered the golden grain, or, to speak more accurately, knew how to extract a pleasing meaning from the most insignificant saying, and employed the remarks of the old Agadists as interpreters of new views and thoughts. By utilising the Agadic elements, his method of preaching acquired a peculiar character, and exercised a strong power of attraction over the pious Jews



and the rising generation. The Portuguese (Franconian) Jews, who had migrated from Turkey to Vienna, also listened with pleasure to this lively and spirited preacher. The East and West were united in Mannheimer and in the new Viennese Temple, which was consecrated April, 1826. As if the congregation of this Temple were intended from the outset to complete the work of propitiation between old and new forms, they succeeded in securing the services of Sulzer, a skilled musician, who with his wealth of musical resources, endowed the Hebrew prayers with almost magical expressiveness, and abolished the old objectionable form of synagogal intoning, by his soul-stirring melodies. These melodies rendered the use of an organ superfluous. The soft and swelling chorales and solos of the Viennese Temple, as also Mannheimer's sermons, proved that the antiquated methods were not utterly useless, as violent reformers had represented them to be, but only required modifying in order to be effectual and to create an impression. The pulpit and the choir, working in accord, produced great effect upon the minds of the growing congregation of Vienna, whose affection for their inherited Judaism, and reverence for Jewish antiquity, were combined with a desire to satisfy the demands of progress. The personality of Mannheimer realised this conception. In the pulpit, as in household and social affairs, he appeared, not as a guardian of souls, as a clergyman or priest—he was a bitter enemy of unctuous, self-glorifying minds—but as a tender father, as a friend, adviser, and help. Desiring to avoid all censure when depicting the objectionable side of old customs and new virtues, he educated the community by word and example to become a pattern for others, so that each individual strove to maintain peace and to suppress all dissensions.

It was in Vienna that the subservient humility of

the Jews was first turned into self-respect, and this in spite of the political oppression which lasted until the year of the Revolution. The aversion felt by the barbarous Polish Jews to civilisation gradually disappeared, and gave way to a desire for self-improvement. The Viennese community as it appears, thereby obtained historical importance. The tones that resounded from the pulpit and the choir, stirring the members of the congregation, awoke a mighty echo in the near and remote communities of Austria. Pesth, Prague, and the smaller communities of Hungary and Bohemia followed the impulse given by Vienna, and, influenced by the conciliatory manner with which the "appointed Divine Service" was there conducted, the movement commenced in Vienna extended as far as Galicia.

The election of Chacham Bernays as head of the Hamburg congregation, and Mannheimer's activity in establishing the order of service in the Viennese synagogue, gradually aroused the emulation of other German communities. Educated Rabbis were selected, and they restored to the various synagogues their long-lost importance. The German Jews again made their influence felt in France and Italy. The Franco-Jewish Consistories, which had neglected a favourable opportunity whilst under the preponderating power of France, felt that as they had lost the opportunity of taking energetic action, they must be followers instead of leaders. In Italy those of the communities that belonged to Austria also took part in the agitation which had originated in Germany, although sermons in the vernacular or in Spanish had been delivered there since olden times, and the Divine Services, at least to all appearance, showed no signs of confusion.

How greatly the most distinguished personalities can be affected through perversity or mysticism, so as to nullify their own efforts, was proved by

a striking example in Berlin, where the opposite result to that in Vienna ensued. At the time when the learned German populace were flinging stones at the Jews with the cry of "Hep, Hep!" three Jewish young men met together to plan a sort of conspiracy against the incorrigible Christian State, all three being filled with earnest ideals. They pondered carefully over the means to be employed in destroying the deeply-rooted hatred against Jews in Germany. The first of these three was a man who has grown grey in making researches, and who is still among the living; the second, Edward Gans, the champion and apostle of Hegel's philosophy and the assailant of the old ways of jurisprudence; and lastly an accountant who lived in a literary world, Moses Moser, Heine's most trusted friend, whom he had called, "The Edition de luxe of a Real Man, the Epilogue of Nathan the Wise." They combined (27th November, 1819) for the purpose of founding a "Society for Culture and Science among the Jews." Gans, who was of a mercurial nature, and might have been the leader of a Revolution, was the chief of this movement. These three young men secured the aid of two others similarly disposed, who were enthusiastic for science, freedom and idealism. The two fossilised Mendelssohnians, Ben-David and David Friedländer, became members of the Society, and Jacobson was also ready with advice and assistance when necessary. In all, the Society of Berlin numbered about fifty members, in Hamburg it owned about twenty of the supporters of the Temple Union, and a few others scattered about in one place and another. As already mentioned, Heine afterwards attached himself to it and propagated its doctrines.

The first condition made by the founders of the Order was to adhere faithfully to Judaism, to withstand bravely the allurements of the Church,



and thus give to the young generation a brilliant example of constancy and independence. The Society might have succeeded had it remained true to this programme, and seeing that most of its members were talented and amongst the foremost men of their day, great advantages might have been secured for Judaism. But they started with false premisses, aimed at too wide-spread results, and employed the wrong means to attain their end; for practical minds were wanting in the Society. The false premiss was, that if the Jews acquired a befitting culture, and devoted themselves to arts and science instead of to agriculture and handicrafts, German anti-Semitism would vanish, the sons of Teuto would fraternally embrace the sons of Jacob, and the State would not deny them equal privileges. Therefore the Society desired—though their multitudinous wishes seem almost ludicrous—to establish schools, seminaries and academies for the Jews, to promote trades, arts, agriculture and scientific studies, to promote culture among the Jews, and educate them up to the required level to shine in society. From the idea of founding academies, however, only a sort of private school resulted, where the cultured members of the Society taught or caused to be instructed poor youths who had wandered from Poland into Berlin, students of the Talmud who escaped from its folios to learn “wisdom.” The founders soon perceived that they had only built castles in the air, and the Society of Culture, on account of its pretentious character, met with no support. They therefore took up a less exalted position, limiting themselves to mere agitation, and to the promotion of the knowledge of Judaism, which was certainly a praiseworthy enterprise and a pressing necessity. They determined to deliver discourses in turn, and to establish a journal for the “Knowledge of Judaism.” But the leaders themselves did not exactly know what was meant

by this term, nor how they should commence to carry out their work.

Hegel, the profound thinker and great sophist, the philosopher of the Court and Church, introduced these young Jews, ardent in the pursuit of the truth, into the labyrinths of his method, and altogether confused their ideas.

Young Israel, the founders of the Society of Culture, at first listened to the utterances of this philosophical acrobat as to oracles. In a parrot-like manner they repeated the phrases after him, that Judaism is the religion of the spirit which has given up the ghost, and that Christianity has swallowed up the whole of ancient history, in order to exhibit it in a renovated and ennobled guise. They also accustomed themselves, like their master, to walk as upon stilts. The simplest thoughts were represented in distorted forms, as though they actually did not wish to be understood. Whence, indeed, could a heart for Judaism have awakened in them? Edward Gans, it is true, was continually speaking of the "unrelieved pain of Judaism," but at the same time thought to himself that he would not obtain any position in Prussia. What could have been the aim of the science of Judaism which this Society of Culture desired to promote? Gans expressed it in the hollow phrases of the Hegelian jargon, and though he was their leader, he did not know what cause his followers should take up.

"The Jews can neither perish nor can Judaism be utterly destroyed. But in the great movement of the whole, it may appear to perish, and still continue to live, just as the stream lives on in the ocean."

The Society desired to assist in demolishing the wall of separation dividing the Jews from Christians, and the Jewish world from the European. They also wished to abolish every dissimilarity existing between their own system and the universal one.

The "Journal" of the Society of Culture testified to the uncertainty and obscurity of its aim. Its articles consisted chiefly of indigestible Hegelian phraseology or of learned matter, which could only be used by an exceedingly limited circle as the material for their work. Heine, who never tried to conceal anything, bluntly declared to the editor of the journal, "That the greater part of it is useless owing to its obscure form."

"Had I not known by chance what Marcus [one of the contributors] and Gans were aiming at, I should not understand anything of what they have written . . . . Impress upon your contributors to cultivate a clear style. Without this, culture cannot thrive."

And yet with this farrago of nonsense the Society not only hoped to elevate the Jews, but even Judaism, and complained that the former paid no regard to their efforts. Gans, in an article giving an account of their plans, objected that the founders were not understood. What he ascribed to the Jews in general was especially true of the Society of Culture—

"Enthusiasm for religion, together with the solidity of ancient institutions has vanished, but no new enthusiasm has come to light, and no new state of affairs has appeared in its stead. Only a negative advance has been effected, which consists in despising and contemning things as they are, without troubling to find some different solution."

This marvel could least of all be brought about by the Society of Culture, because it was deaf to the voice of God, which spoke in Jewish history, in Jewish law from its very commencement, and in the Jewish people. The Society inveighed against the whole world, and relieved its feelings in elegiac effusions. Gans, the chief mover, poured out his wrath over the rich men in Israel, who showed no sympathy with his world-awakening dreams.

Great was the disappointment of the founders of the Society of Culture. Its supporters diminished



rather than increased in number. The journal which contained their wonderfully Utopian speeches found no readers, supplies ran short, and, finally, the members themselves forsook their standard, and in spite of a secret oath, embraced Christianity. Edward Gans thought, in his own heart, of rising to power on the waters of baptism, and was urged to take the step by the dissensions among the German Jews, the contemptuous tone in which the sons of Judaism spoke of their own people, and the numerous examples of baptism in their midst. Up to the year 1823 there were no less than 1,236 conversions in Berlin, comprising half of the members of the community, and in other parts of Prussia there were 1,382. This circumstance, aided by the High Church party at the Prussian Court, brought about the formation in Berlin of a Society, "For the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews," who hoped to see the whole body of the Jews enter the Church. The election of talented Jews to professional posts was strenuously opposed. In vain did Hardenberg, the minister, intercede for Gans, in order to obtain for him the Chair of Historical Jurisprudence, which was his special branch of study. Gans was already considering the possibility of becoming baptised, whilst he was delivering long addresses before the Society of Culture. The Society dissolved, and at length died out quietly, uncared for, and unregretted. Gans, the chief mover of the Society, who possessed sufficient wealth to enable him to remain true to his vow, increased the number of Christians by another sceptic and infidel. This so exasperated Heine, although he himself was a convert to the ranks of Christianity, that two decades later he could not forgive Gans, even after the grave had closed over him.

"The apostasy of Gans was the more disappointing, because he had played the part of an agitator, and had accepted the clearly-

defined duties of a President. It is usual that the captain should be the last to leave the sinking ship; Gans, however, was the first to save himself."

Moser, the second of the Triumvirate of the Society of Culture, remained more steadfast to his views, although he expressed his doubts as to the possibility of saving Judaism, and advised the wholesale baptism of the Jews. The third member of this Triumvirate was the most steadfast, and alone remained thoroughly true to his word. He was also filled with doubts, but not with regard to improvements. He pointed out how the cure or the perfection of the New Revival should commence. "What alone survives and is imperishable in the midst of this Mabul (deluge), is the knowledge of Judaism; it continues to live, even though for centuries no finger has been raised on its behalf. I confess that next to my submission to the justice of God, my hope and support consist in occupying myself with acquiring this knowledge. No storms or experiences could so influence me as to bring me into collision with myself. I have done what I thought it was my duty to do. Because I saw that I was preaching in a wilderness I have ceased to preach, but not in order to be faithless to the purport of my own words. There remains nought for the members of the Society to do, save to remain true, each man to the work of his own limited sphere, and leave the rest to God."

If the Society of Culture, which started on its career filled with high aspirations and which ended so lamentably, only succeeded in producing this one man and in stirring up a love of the knowledge of Judaism, then its dreams and attempts must not be regarded as entirely vain. In history not even the slightest seed is wasted; but no plant could blossom in soil which was covered with the dust cast on it by Friedländer and Jacobson in Berlin. As if smitten with a curse, nothing could thrive or be of

service in the revival of Judaism, although it grew on the spot where Mendelssohn began the work which promised so much for the future. The system of Rabbinical culture, which the combined Rabbinical authorities of Berlin desired to endow with power and call into existence, did not even live to see the light. From another and quite unexpected quarter, however, there arose the prospect, if not of a complete cure, yet of its commencement.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### AWAKENING OF INDEPENDENCE AND A KNOWLEDGE OF JUDAISM.

Dawn of Self-respect—Research into Jewish History—Hannah Adams—Solomon Löwisohn—Jost—His History—The Revolution of July (1830)—Gabriel Riesser—His Lectures—Steinheim—His Works—His “Revelation”—Nachman Krochmal—Rapoport—Erter—His Poems—Rapoport’s Writings—Zunz—Luzzatto—His Exegesis—Geiger—The “Nineteen Letters” of Ben Usiel—New School of Reform—Joel Jacoby.

1830—1840.

IF for a moment the fancy is allowed full play, one can imagine that not only the houses, utensils, and pictures excavated from beneath the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii might be renewed, but also that the entombed men could be suddenly aroused from their sleep of centuries, brought to life, and enabled to collect their thoughts. If these newly-aroused Romans could recall their condition when the catastrophe befell them, could conjure up before their mind’s eye the splendour of their greatness, remember the mighty institutions which they and their ancestors had called into existence, give a representation of the heroic power which the Roman people had developed, and if they felt the same power still stirring within them, they might lay claim to a feeling of importance which would not be altogether unjustifiable. This supposition is, however, no fantastic idea: a nation actually did arise from the darkness of the tomb, the only example of such a case as chronicled in the annals of man. This resuscitated people, the Jewish race,

endeavoured at its resurrection to collect its thoughts and memories, and recall a vision of its glorious past; feeling itself to be both old and young at the same time, rich in memories and lacking in experience, possessing a hoary antiquity of perfect sequence and yet as inexperienced as if but of yesterday. The Jews began to examine minutely the memorials of their past, which had become intermingled with the history of nations and had acquired fulness of development, in the hope of gaining a clue by means of which they could find a way through the labyrinths of existence. The knowledge of Judaism therefore consisted in the revival of its great history, and its own peculiar doctrines. This effort of memory is not merely an amusing game, a pleasant pastime for the satisfaction of the curious, but an irresistible impulse of self-examination. It arouses the dormant strength in the breast of the inquirer, and inspires him with a feeling of self-confidence which will produce in the future results similar to those of the past. Self-consciousness is awakened in this people, thus resuscitated, whilst the emulation of younger nations crushes down its innate feeling of assertiveness, only arousing a desire to prove itself a true people of God.

But history does not go so far: it only shows how self-respect was awakened; how the Jews no longer blushed for their origin, or in the avowal of it; how they no longer hesitate when questioned about it; no longer, from false shame and their own evil plight, took that false step, and made a confession far more distasteful to them than the acknowledgment of their descent. As if this feeling were to be awakened with especial force, there arose from the midst of the Jewish nation artists of great ability—artists in tone, colour, and poets of the first rank, who by their efforts secured a public recognition for their race. The self-respect of the

Jews was the outcome of political maturity, and in turn has resulted in wonderful inventions and an increase of general intelligence during the last decade, but the new condition of things and its consequent achievements were chiefly aroused, strengthened, and promoted by talented Jews.

Although the history of this period is still in progression, and being closely connected with the fleeting present, its results cannot as yet be definitely stated like those of bygone days, yet the fact cannot be denied that the aim of Jewish life has been to strive earnestly for the attainment of those two precious acquirements—self-reliance and self-knowledge. These qualities are intimately connected, the one completing and assisting the other. Their own experiences in history enabled the Jews to make a careful and unprejudiced study of the origin and growth of their nationality, and of the peculiarities of their teachings, to recognise their worth, and neither to hide nor ignore the past. The insight which they obtained into their own doctrines contributed to increase their self-reliance, and induced them to remove the obstacles which had retarded all branches of study. The struggles in which the Jews had been engaged during the preceding years to secure civil, political, and social equality and to bring about the reformation and refinement of Judaism, stood in closest connection with these two qualities—on the one hand, with the better appreciation of their own condition, and on the other, with their growing self-reliance, which influenced this development or was influenced by it.

Step by step the mountain heaps of obstructive rubbish had to be cleared away, an open space cut out, new building materials procured or collected, before it was possible, not to think of putting the crowning stone to the edifice, but even to add to the unfinished, structure. Unconsciously the entire



race set to work upon this gigantic task, of which no one had dreamed fifty years before, still less had it been considered in any way practicable. A deep but almost unconscious attachment to Judaism on the part of enthusiastic spirits enabled them to attain their end, a result which must be regarded by posterity as a marvel. Jewish knowledge, after laborious research and investigations, brought into prominence three important points; the continuance of Jewish history and its significance in its long chain of events, the precious treasure of Jewish teaching, and its vast extent. Finally the enduring faculty of the Jewish race, which defied so many persecutions, rendered certain qualities hereditary, accomplished such remarkable miracles of history, and was the means of revealing the law of salvation. These three aspects promoted the comprehension of history, of the tenets of Judaism, and of its own especial nationality. Each of these branches of knowledge had to be pursued from its commencement and followed through a long course, when, if not brought to a conclusion, it at least reached a state in which it could be clearly grasped and understood.

All nations desirous of establishing the fact of their present independence and vitality seek to verify their ancient history, interest themselves in remembrances of the past, and bring to light their ancestral weapons, to prove that, after experiencing the vicissitudes of fortune and misfortune, the alternations of strength and weakness, victory and defeat, they have shown their strength, and therefore may lay claim to continued existence and development. The Jewish people had no need to make search for famous exploits or for monuments of their powers; even in their apparently servile condition these were not wanting. One century after another proclaimed this fact, and it was only needful to give ear to, or not wholly

to disregard this voice amid a crowd of selfish interests. The history of the Jews bore tacit testimony to the people's greatness; but it was not easy to portray them in a favourable light. The history of the Jewish nation had been distorted or erroneously depicted by the thousand unjust prejudices of the age. Under the cruel persecutions of their tormentors, the Jews could not retain the accumulated reminiscences of their great past; these were only known in distorted fragments. Christian scholars, influenced by the grandeur of the theme, had indeed formed these disjointed fragments into a sort of whole; but the picture could not be a true one, seeing that many component parts were wanting. The bright colours had faded, and there was a preponderance of shadow, perhaps intentionally placed there. Even well-disposed defenders of the Jews, like Dohm and Gregoire, who had written a portion of the annals of Jewish history, could not give an exact representation. More than a century had elapsed since the worthy French Protestant clergyman, Basnage, after diligently studying Jewish history, gave to the world his somewhat fragmentary researches. A lady, the wife of an American clergyman, Hannah Adams, of Boston, struck by the fact of the marvellous existence of the Jewish nation, also delineated their history from the time of the return from Babylon to recent days. For many reasons she was not qualified to give an intelligible outline of Jewish history, but could only string together a number of rough sketches without any connection or sequence. This crude work, nevertheless, was good enough for the purposes of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews, who also made several alterations in the book in order to serve their ends. Fidelity to history and truth were entirely lacking in it.

It was high time that Jews should take away the

pen from the hands of Christians who only trifled with it, and used it for their own purposes. However feeble might be the first attempts, and meagre as were their conceptions of historical principles, yet it is worthy of notice that the Christian seal, impressed upon it by ignorance, and in order to claim it as a speciality of the Church, was thus removed from Jewish history. The first Jew who turned his attention to the great characteristics of the history of his race, and published a part of that history, deserves a post of honour. He was a talented youth who bore upon his forehead the madness which is often the mark of a true poet, and which carried him to his grave in early youth. Solomon Löwisohn (born in Moor, Hungary, 1789, died 1822), reared amid the most unfavourable circumstances, succeeded in acquiring a good education, and qualified himself to appreciate the merits of his nation's peculiar learning through the medium of secular knowledge. Löwisohn acquired a much truer comprehension of the beauty and sweetness of Hebrew poetry, of its sublimity and simplicity, than did Herder, because he was better acquainted with it. He also regarded the history of his people from a poetical and at the same time from a true standpoint. In his "Lectures upon the modern History of the Jews, from the beginning of their Dispersion till the present Day," he succeeded in unrolling a charming picture. He also dwelt upon certain important points, tracing their origin and showing the lines to be followed, in order to avoid confusion in this apparent chaos.

Jewish history assumed a better form in the hands of Isaac Marcus Jost (born at Bernberg, 1793; died at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1860). He had greater courage than his more gifted contemporaries, and although not possessed of sufficient resource to undertake a gigantic task, he deserves credit for having pointed out a way through the vast



labyrinth. When the bigoted Germanisers desired to expel the Jews from Teutonic soil, and the Jew-haters searched the pages of history for an excuse to slander the Jews and their writers, Jost determined to show them in a better light. He especially desired to prove that they were peaceful citizens and faithful subjects. They had certainly opposed the Roman Emperors and had maintained a vigorous war against them, but this was only the act of a few boisterous brawlers, whose folly should not be visited upon the entire people. On the whole, the Jews, with few exceptions, had proved themselves brave men, and had not slaughtered Christian children, nor had they in any way deserved the reproaches levelled against them. It was only the Pharisees and their descendants the Rabbis, detestable men, filled with superstition, darkness and arrogance, who had made hell hot for a mob who were the especial adherents of the Rabbis. This is the basis of Jost's delineation of Jewish history. He wished at the same time to confute both the admirers and antagonists of Jewish history. No one at the present day can deny the one-sidedness of his representation. Nevertheless Jost performed a real service to his people by his historical labours. (He offered something new to his age, and as far as possible set bounds to those indispensable bases of history, time and space.) (He cannot be reproached with utilising the sources of history for facts without having investigated them.) (It was not the custom in his days carefully to test such evidences or to examine their accuracy as on a finely-balanced scale.) Jost's "History" proved a good guide and instructor to statesmen engaged in the amelioration of the condition of the Jews.

(But the main objection to Jost's method of narrative cannot be disregarded, seeing that even in his old age, and in spite of improved knowledge, he

yet remained firm to his original ideas. He gave to the undeniably heroic Jewish history a dry, perverted character, despoiling it of the brightness with which it was endowed even by unprejudiced Christian observers. He tore to shreds the heroic dramas of thousands of years. Between the old Israelites, the ancestors and contemporaries of the Prophets and Psalmists, and the Jews, the offspring of the Rabbis, Jost hollowed out a deep artificial chasm, marking a sharp distinction between them, as if the latter were not the descendants of the former, but of an entirely different stock. And why? Because Jost, the pupil of Friedländer and Jacobson, denied all miracles, not only those performed by changes in the laws of nature, but also such as were brought about through inspiration and steady endurance, the miracles of history, which owing to the peculiar combination of blows and counter-blows, bring into existence action and reaction. He saw in history only an accumulation of contingencies which were subject to no law. Therefore the Jews were not to be considered as the sons of the Israelites, nor the Rabbis as the successors of the Prophets, nor the Talmud as the outcome of the Bible, unless miracles had occurred.

In Europe, which had fallen into a state of almost glaring stupidity, there now occurred a historical marvel which caused a sensation from one end of the Continent to the other. From the serene sky in the West there came a lightning flash; a thunderclap and terrifying crash followed, as if the end of the world had come—the Revolution of July (1830) was indeed a miracle. No one had expected it, or was prepared for it. Even the men who brought it about, and fought in it, were only impelled by some dark feeling, had no reason for their actions, but were the blind agents in the hand of the Ruler of history.

This revolution affected the Jews and con-

sequently Judaism, as had every important change in history. The equalisation of the Jews in France, although settled by the Constitution, had suffered somewhat under the two Bourbons, Louis XVIII. and Charles X., as the nobility and the Catholic clergy were possessed of great influence, and had given a hint to the public officials that they should not be too friendly to the Jews. The reactionary Catholic Church soon began to renew its old intolerance against the Jews, and the police displayed an enmity to Jewish culture. Had the Bourbons been able to gratify their own wishes by prohibiting the decrees which established liberty and equality, the French Jews would have been the first sacrifices, and they would once more have been placed under exceptional laws, as was the case with their German co-religionists. The Days of July were thus of momentous importance to them. The first Assembly of Deputies under King Louis Philippe (who was desirous of drawing up the Charter of Truth) also resolved to abolish all existing inequalities, however slight, between Jews and Christians. One of the Deputies, Viennet, proposed (August 7th, 1830) to remove from the Constitutional Code any recognition of a State religion, and to grant State subsidies to Jews equally with Catholics and Protestants. His proposition was supported on all sides. A few months later (November 13th) the Minister of Public Education, Mérilhon, brought forward a motion to place Judaism upon an equal footing with the other two creeds, to pay salaries from the public treasury to the Synagogue, and the Rabbis, as well as to the Church and its servants. He also bestowed praise upon the French Jews, saying that since their deliverance under the Revolution they had shown themselves worthy of the privileges granted to them. He exhorted the Deputies to agree to the law of equality for the three creeds.



In the Chamber of Peers it was more difficult to pass the law decreeing the equality of Judaism and Christianity; there were still some obstinate opponents to it. On this occasion much was said about the recognition of the Jews by the tribunal of the Parisian Chamber of Peers. The names of those Jews who had left behind them a glorious reputation in history were mentioned, such as Philo, the representative of Jewish philosophy in ancient times; Maimonides, "in the Middle Ages and modern days"; Mendelssohn, "the sage, who was compared by German philosophy even to Plato."

When the division was taken in the Chamber of Peers (January 1st, 1831), the law for the complete equalisation of the Jews in the State was carried by 89 votes to 57. Thus the last barriers in France between the adherents of Judaism and their Christian neighbours were removed. King Louis Philippe, on the 8th of February, ratified the law, which enacted that French Rabbis, as well as Catholic and Protestant clergymen, should receive part of their salary from the public exchequer. The High School, which was soon afterwards founded for the training of Rabbis in Metz (Collège Rabbinique), was recognised as a State institution, and was partly supported by contributions from the public budget. At the same time, the Senate at Frankfort-on-the-Maine brought forward a motion for granting civil rights to the Jews, which law was especially aimed at the abrogation of limitations to marriage. But out of 90 members of the legislative body, two-thirds voted against it.

Owing to the shock caused by the events of July, which was also felt in Germany, a feeling of self-dependence became awakened there also; all timidity and false shame in speaking about Jews and Judaism vanished, as if the crash had hurled the avalanche of Judæophobia into utter destruction. Even Jews belonging to so-called good society, who,

✓ for the sake of some material advantage, were ready to forget that they were members of an oppressed race, and preferred to conceal or ignore the injustice done to them, now began to manifest a knowledge of what was due to them, and gradually freed themselves from a feeling of shame when known to be Jews. This change of sentiment, which, like every change in thought, showed itself in different ways, was brought about by influential personalities.

Gabriel Riesser (born 1806, died 1860), a man of noble mind and great energy, took a prominent part in awakening this feeling of self-respect. However bitter might be the complaints of the German Jews as to the disgrace brought upon them by immigrant Polish Jews, they were amply compensated by Riesser. His spirit of firm determination he derived more from his maternal grandfather, Rabbi Raphael Cohen, who had emigrated from Poland, than from his weak, good-natured German father. Gabriel Riesser belonged entirely to the spirit of modern times. He did not, like most of the adherents of the new movement, study modern history with a side-glance at ancient days. His thoughts, feelings, and dreams were German; and only slight traces of his Jewish origin are perceptible. Riesser was indifferent to Judaism in its national form, which is like leaven to the dough of history; he retained traces of his youth and family only in his disposition and recollections. Otherwise, he owned some diluted doctrines of faith, which he followed without desiring to defend them. He carried in his breast, however, a secret expectation that Judaism would continue to flourish in a rejuvenated healthy form, though he did not define clearly wherein this revival should consist. To assist in promoting it was altogether outside his intentions. Had he not been roused by his chosen vocation he would have remained a harmless German citizen, a conscien-

tious judge or lawyer, without troubling himself to obtain opportunities for the improvement of the world or to make alterations in a corrupt state of affairs. German Jew-hatred roused him to defend the derided cause of his fellow-sufferers. His first work as a lawyer attracted attention. He then tried to become an attorney in his native town, but was refused. He next sought to deliver lectures in Heidelberg upon jurisprudence, but the Chair was taken from him. In the same way his career as a lawyer had been cut short. His gentle but liberty-loving nature revolted against such foolish exclusions. Thus Riesser, who felt no particular call to work on behalf of the general public, was driven to become an agitator, not alone for the freedom of his co-religionists, but also for that of the whole German nation. He made it his first duty in life to secure equal privileges for the Jews, and to defend them whenever attacked. "The unspeakable sufferings throughout two centuries of many millions of persons who patiently waited for deliverance" weighed heavily upon him. His ideal was Lessing. In his first pamphlet (1831), he spoke with conscious pride, not alone against German rulers, but against the people, who refused permission to the Jews to ascend even the lowest rung on the ladder of equality. He did not spare those of his co-religionists who, on account of their superior education and social position, contemptuously looked down upon the mass of Jews, and were ashamed of the name of Jew. "If unjust hatred," he exclaimed, "clings to our name, should we not, instead of denying it, rather use all our strength to secure honour for it?" He contributed freely in aiding to remove a portion of the contempt cast upon this name. Riesser aimed chiefly at bringing the Jews into honour and respect. No selfish thoughts of the attainment of benefits which had been withheld stimulated his action; but a desire to take part in



the unceasing contest between freedom and oppression, justice and injustice, truth and falsehood. Filled with indignation he openly represented to the German rulers that the reason for depriving the Jews of their rights as men was the hope that the Jews might thereby be induced to accept baptism. He also attacked the faint-hearted Jews who, having a comfortable position, separated themselves from the main body of their brethren, or through a false confession of creed purchased rights of equality, or handed over their children to the Church to be instructed. Riesser desired to see societies established which should endeavour to energetically work for the emancipation of the Jews. Sympathisers were united by a kind of covenant to give their word of honour that they would remain true to their fellow-sufferers, and persevere in their efforts until these were crowned with success. Ten years previously the Berlin Society of Culture had not dared to publish such a programme. Between Edward Gans and Gabriel Riesser, however, came the Revolution of July. Riesser also invited Christians to join, inasmuch as it behoved well-disposed men of every belief to participate in the honourable attempt to release an enslaved people.

Riesser's words produced their due effect, for they came at an opportune moment, when men's minds had become susceptible. His utterances, though imbued with determination, were mild, and made a deeper impression than had been the case with Börne, despite the biting keenness of the latter. The tone of positive certainty with which Riesser foretold the ultimate victory of liberty penetrated all hearts, and filled them with hope. Various favourable events which now took place appeared to put a seal on his prophecy. For the first time the question of the emancipation of the Jews began to be discussed in the English Parlia-

ment, and the chief men roused the attention of the House of Commons. A resolution was passed in the Electorate of Hesse, the first German province to legalize the emancipation of the Jews who resided there. This gave Riesser courage to pursue his ideal hope yet further. He was indefatigable in his efforts for the cause to which he had devoted his life, but he kept in view the honour and credit to be obtained, more than any desire for material gain. Not even the most unimportant ritual ceremony should be sacrificed in order to obtain rights of citizenship, if these could only be procured at such a cost; a rule which he most emphatically laid down on this occasion.

The Jews of Baden, as a token of their gratitude, presented him with a beautifully designed picture by the Jewish painter Oppenheim, which artistically depicted the transition period in Jewish life, and the separation of the old and the new. It was called "The return of the Jewish warrior," and represented him surprising his parents and relatives in the midst of their slumber on the Sabbath. In his letter acknowledging this kind gift, Riesser remarked, "The father is foolish who wished to wrap his son in the garments of antiquity . . . but the son who is ashamed of his father, or the generations of the past, is wanting in honour." This deeply-rooted feeling was communicated to the younger generation with the more intensity, because it proceeded from a man who was less a representative of Judaism than a lawyer and a firm lover of Germanism. Riesser, indeed, made the emancipation question a national one by his contest with the Judæophobists, Paulus, Edward Meyer, Pfizer, Streckfuss, and other enemies of freedom in the German Houses of Parliament, who utilized the contempt attached to the Jews mainly to distract public attention from their struggles for liberty. Riesser further ventilated the Jewish question in

the programme of Liberalism. Young Germany, and all who took part against oppression were thus compelled to inscribe religious liberty and the equality of all classes upon their banner, however  
X great might be their antipathy against the Jews. But Riesser performed a far greater service, by  
X rousing a feeling of dignity in the Jews, and by destroying that false shame which the so-called  
X cultured people felt for the name of Jew. His wonderfully persuasive powers, the genuineness of his sentiments, as evinced in every stroke of his pen, opened all hearts to him.

At this time Judaism was not conspicuous for its talented men; but the younger generation was richer in distinguished intellects, who remedied the losses occasioned by the Berlin Society of Culture. One of these sterling characters was the bosom friend of Riesser, a physician, Solomon Ludwig Steinheim (born, Altona, 1790; died, Zurich, 1866). His was a highly gifted nature, which dwelt upon the sunny heights of thought; and from this eminence the foolish pursuits of the multitude appeared like idle mists, blown hither and thither by the wind.

In Steinheim was revealed in all its splendour, and with its powers of redemption, the Jewish thought, without which Judaism would merely be a thousand years' dream, the thought, namely, which gives the Jewish race a gigantic mission at the end of time, and with which mission its teachings and fortunes are consistent. This idea may have been unconsciously aroused in Steinheim by Isaac Bernays. Together with his wealth of thought, Steinheim possessed a skilful knowledge of arrangement and method, which enabled him to clothe his ideas in an interesting form, and to adorn them with his rich gifts of eloquence. He might be compared to Jehuda Halevi, the Castilian poet-philosopher, had he been gifted with higher poetical talents. His first production, "The Songs of Obadiah ben



Amos from the Exile," displayed germs of the fruitful seed of thought which he had already disseminated. A Jewish sage, Obadiah, in Egypt, describes to his son Eliakim, supposed to be living at the time of the Ptolemies, the different stages of greatness and abjection through which the Jewish people were to pass.

"It is the design and aim of Providence that a weak people, to whom the ultimate remedy has been foretold, shall be persecuted, hunted down, and sacrificed among millions of enemies throughout thousands of years, and nevertheless continue to remain alive and active. Our ancestors received for themselves and their descendants the consecrated office of the priesthood. The family of Jacob, since its beginning, has been alternately dispersed and gathered together, and thus trained for its vocation."

To this end also the Jewish people have entered upon their pilgrimage over the surface of the globe, so that the luminous seeds of a pure worship of God and an ideal of exalted morality may be scattered abroad. From this moral pinnacle Steinheim beheld the past and the future of Judaism in the clearest light. All riddles were solved, all questions answered; the doctrines and history of Israel afforded satisfactory and comforting replies. The priestly mission of Israel was also to undergo the test of great sufferings; this saviour of the world was compelled to wear a crown of thorns, and to be humiliated to the condition of a slave. Steinheim saw the past and the future of Israel as through a magic mirror, bright, clear, and rich in colours. Only the present was puzzling to him. The estrangement of the sons of his people from their Creator, their despair of themselves, their contempt for their teachings and descent, the daily recurring apostasies and desertion of the flag appeared to him as omens of the approaching downfall, as though the high priests of mankind were to become worldly, profane their sanctity, and exchange their birth-right for a mess of pottage. Such self-estrangement and self-debasement Steinheim desired to prevent. He therefore composed his "Songs of Obadiah in

Exile," in which he worked out his train of thought.

"Such times were dangerous, when oppression was lessened, but not altogether removed, or when freedom was near, but not completely attained. At these periods to desert the customs of by-gone ages was deemed meritorious and advantageous, because a desire for transitory benefits gives rise to indifference to the eternal. This is the time for real lamentation, when every folly is taken seriously and every serious thing is considered as folly; when mockery is in every mouth, and insolence and license in every heart, and when no place is accorded to serious matters in the adverse presence of satirical laughter."

Steinheim's muse severely rebuked the unthinking individuals who seceded from the Jewish religion.

Meanwhile Steinheim wished not only to reprove but also to instruct and convince. He did not address himself to the prosperous, the contented, and the rich, but to "youth with its pains and its ardent longings, its ready sensibility to light and justice." To these he dedicated his book so fertile in thought, "Revelation according to the System of the Synagogue" (February, 1835). Having an intensely philosophical brain, Steinheim submitted the whole system of the law to a searching examination, regarding it as the highest object, as the "miracle of miracles," by which alone the restless inquiring human mind could arrive at inner contentment. With great acuteness he attempted to give an answer to the question: What is this highly-prized and deeply-scorned Judaism? All Jewish thinkers had succeeded in proving that its fundamental principles agreed with the axioms of mental philosophy, or at least were not in contradiction to them. If man were left solely to the misleading guidance of reason or of natural philosophy, he would find not a clue for his moral actions out of the labyrinth of contradiction and uncertainty. It is, therefore, concluded Steinheim, a poor compliment to religion to say that it is in accord with reason: because the latter is the

Chronos which consumes his own offspring; building up with one hand and destroying with the other. The only religion that is in accordance with reason is heathenism, or natural religion in its various modifications, viz., that heathenism which has been the origin of so much mischief to morality, in which "robbers, thieves, adulterers, and sodomites found their finest examples." If Christianity desires to renounce its joint origin with Judaism (a common practice since Schleiermacher and Hegel set the fashion of so doing), it must sink to the lowest depths of heathenism. Love and hatred, Ahriman and Ormuz, Christ and Satan, with their playthings of eternal matter, over which the two powers are ever contending, as also inexorable necessity—are the fundamental ideas of natural religion: man himself succumbs before the suffering inflicted by necessity:

"Through eternal, immovable, mighty laws  
Must we all complete the circle of our existence."

"Like the gods, so are their priests and sages: like king, like flock."

In opposition to this sensual or perhaps refined heathenism comes Judaism with its totally different mode of thought. It sets up a personal God who does not coincide with, and is not identical with, Nature; is not divided into two principles: it recognises a "Creatio ex Nihilo," without eternal matter. It lays distinct stress upon human freedom, and consequently upon man's responsibility in his moral actions. These truths and others have not been evolved by human reason, nor could they be so evolved, but were revealed upon Sinai. Although these facts had formerly been strange to reason, yet they were so clear and convincing that they were soon accepted, and displaced the seemingly contradictory phases of thought regarding the perplexing natural phenomena, of which the causes cannot be



explained by reason. Sinai, with its lightning-flashes, shed both light and warmth over the world, clearness of thought and moral purity. The synagogue formed a sharply defined antithesis both to mythological religion and the Church. "From Zion the law comes forth, and the word of God from Jerusalem": with inspired enthusiasm Steinheim subscribed to these prophetic and half-fulfilled words. When he had discovered, or thought he had discovered the soul of Judaism, Steinheim became filled with an ardent zeal, which might appear strange in a man engaged in sober contemplation. This love for Judaism so illumined his mind and facilitated his understanding of the past that he even learned to value the activity and energy of the greatly despised Rabbis.

Through his "Revelation" Steinheim correctly propounded many facts, at least he once more brought to light ancient truths which had been ignored or forgotten. No one either in his own age or in the preceding one understood the fundamental principles of Judaism so thoroughly as he did, although several of his hypotheses and inferences cannot be completely established. He, however, made but slight impression upon his contemporaries, although he set forth the sublime grandeur of Judaism with almost prophetic inspiration, and in an attractive manner. Whence came this failure? It arose from the fact that the life and actions of Steinheim did not accord with his thoughts and sentiments. In agreement with his words, he ought to have become intimately associated with the "Synagogue which from ignorance became daily more deserted," to have participated in its woes and ignominy, to have joined in the celebration of its days of festivity and sadness, and to have clothed himself with the pride of those who were externally slaves, but in their hearts freemen. But Steinheim did nothing of the kind: he kept himself at a greater

distance from the Jewish community and Jewish life than ever. What he correctly recognised as the origin of the resistance to the doctrines of Judaism, "the simplicity and servile condition of its adherents," also repelled instead of attracting him.

"The name of the people, which was their protection, had degenerated into a by-word, and now it is demanded that a doctrine should be accepted whose supporters are given up to hatred, contempt, and persecution."

To renounce Judaism altogether, like Heine, Edward Gans, and many others, appeared to Steinheim dishonourable and wanton; and he therefore remained externally faithful. But, although he had recognised the truth that the mission of Israel consisted not only in being priests, but also in sacrificing themselves, he did not permit this knowledge to influence his course of life. This was not due to weakness of character in Steinheim, but to an insufficient knowledge of Judaism in its many-sidedness. In spite of his predilection for its wealth of thought, he was more at home in any other subject than in Jewish literature.

A deeper knowledge of Judaism was unexpectedly aroused in another quarter, and in a country which cultured men like Riesser and Steinheim were accustomed to despise. Just as it was formerly asked, What good can come from Galilee? so now it was said, What good can come from Poland? And yet from this very place there came fruitful seeds which developed into healthy blossoms. Two men especially, Nachman Krochmal and Solomon Jehuda Rapoport profitably employed the knowledge which they had gained in Germany. Both of them seemed destined to fill a gap, to which the scholars of Jewish science in Germany and France were unequal. They dug out solid ore from the mines which were inaccessible in these countries, and showed how it should be fashioned

and worked. They stirred up a spirit of rivalry within the short space of three decades, and succeeded in removing the ruins covering the great past of Judaism, and in bringing to light the Divine pictures hidden beneath. They were the founders of a new school which may be called the Galician.

Nachman Cohen Krochmal (born at Brody, 1785, died at Tarnopol, 1840) was the son of a well-to-do merchant. He was famed for his knowledge, and was accustomed to make journeys to Germany, where he caught up the pale, dying light of Mendelssohn's school. Mendelssohn was the ideal upon which Krochmal modelled himself. Married at the age of fourteen, and transplanted to the little village of Zolkiew, where the method of instruction so destructive to knowledge was still in vogue, Krochmal became entirely absorbed in the study of Hebrew literature. He also tried to obtain the writings of the German philosophers, and especially of Kant, in order to expand and clear his mind with earnest thoughts. The more did the strict Talmudists and heretic-hunting Chassidim of Poland endeavour to discover those who occupied themselves with works other than the Talmud or Kabbala, or who read a non-Hebraic book, in order to denounce them—the more did Krochmal and his fellow-students enjoy their stolen pleasure. Krochmal entertained, in close proximity to an accumulated mass of knowledge from the Talmud, many thoughts of a character hostile to Talmudism. But matters never came as far as open strife. Krochmal, probably on account of his health, which had become enfeebled by continued mental activity, was too timid to venture out of the beaten track: he avoided all disputes, gave his approval to the excessive piety of Polish customs, and was anxious to maintain a state of peace. He was too earnest and too prudent to overstep the bounds of habit; nevertheless, he could not altogether escape



suspicion. He had carried on a harmless correspondence with a Karaite Chacham in the neighbouring village of Kukizow. Certain pious persons knew this, and represented that he was hatching a conspiracy against the Talmud with the Karaites. They obtained one of his letters from the unsuspecting Karaite, endeavoured to extract heresies from the innocent compliments which he had made in verse, and published it throughout the large community of Lemberg in order to excite the mob against him. This intrigue greatly affected Krochmal: he took it to heart, and becoming yet more timid and cautious, locked up his thoughts within his own breast, and for a long time could not be induced to publish anything.

But he revealed the treasures of his mind to his trusty friends and pupils, not within walls, which might have ears, but in the open fields. His hearers, who were schooled in the Talmud, and accustomed to unravel dark and difficult problems, quickly understood his hints, without rendering it necessary for him to enter upon diffuse explanations. By his system of laconic brevity Krochmal was able to touch upon every subject, from the highest to the lowest, and to unfold a series of investigations, every sentence of which, if made public, would have forthwith stamped him in the eyes of his countrymen as a wicked heretic. What especially made his method of instruction and his investigations so fruitful, was the clearness and finish of his thoughts, which were arranged in admirable sequence. Thus he transformed every chaotic contradiction or confused idea—from which Polish brains greatly suffered—into a simple and comprehensible statement. His acquaintance with German philosophy had schooled his mind, and taught him logical discipline. Krochmal did not develop much original philosophy, a subject which he nevertheless seems to have thought his strong

point. He was the first to take a philosophical view of history, especially of Jewish history, and to make a clear survey of its intricacies. He also pointed out how the mine of the Talmud could be utilized, and rendered valuable. Krochmal directed attention to this neglected and little valued literature, and applied its results to the elucidation of Jewish history in its inner course. He succeeded in throwing so much light on the period from the Babylonian Captivity until the conclusion of the Mishnah, which Jost and Christian scholars had failed to do, that it was an easy task for succeeding inquirers to follow in his path. He first taught men to examine Talmudical sources of history through a microscope, or to reproduce half-obliterated incidents. And this was indeed a great gain and an immense advance compared to Jost's clumsy view of history. The results of Krochmal's investigations cannot indeed be demonstrated as altogether correct, because having no access to non-Hebraic writings, he was obliged to content himself with assistance which came at second or third hand. But his acute vision, and sincere devotion to this study, did not often allow him to stray from the right track. He urged his pupils to engage in research, and gave them the key to hieroglyphic sources. Although he had not as yet published many of his discoveries, his fame extended beyond the boundaries of his own country. The community of Berlin, which since the time of Friedländer had felt a deep aversion to Poles and Rabbis, now entertained the idea of electing him as their Rabbi. He was considered as one of the leaders of young Jewish science, and had many admirers in Germany.

The most receptive and gifted among his pupils, Solomon Jehuda Rapoport (born Lemberg, 1790? died Prague, 1867), contested with him for pre-eminence, and even overshadowed him,

chiefly through his more fertile productions. Rapoport was descended from an illustrious Jewish family, a race of learned Rabbis, one of whose branches had been transplanted from Italy into Poland. Traces of his hereditary nobility might be noted in his bearing and appearance. Of a gentle nature, which won for him all hearts, having a fund of harmless humour and of a sociable disposition, Rapoport was a well-beloved and attractive person in every society. Owing to these qualities, the power of his astonishing learning became somewhat lessened. Nothing of especial importance occurred during his youth. At an early age he was admitted to the study of the Talmud, and soon became at home in its labyrinths, owing to his extraordinary memory and penetrating acuteness. He also married young.

During his youth, Rapoport became partly false to his Talmudical learning, inasmuch as he favoured its rivals—science and poetry. With great intuitive power he describes the painful path which had to be trodden by him and his fellow-students in order to arrive at the tree of knowledge. It was especially difficult to obtain any scientific book, and still more difficult to secure one written in a European language. The Index of prohibited books in public opinion was much more comprehensive than in that of the Popes. Any one thirsting for knowledge who secretly procured such a book, when this was scented out by the prying eyes of any of his relatives or friends, would be implored to throw it aside, or his friends, on their own responsibility, would confiscate the heretical work, so as to preserve the student from fanatical accusations of heresy by the Chassidim. Even liberal-minded men were doubtful whether, according to the Talmud, the study of profane sciences was not forbidden.

Meanwhile Rapoport was not alone in his longing



for knowledge. Here and there, in Galicia, the germs of a fresh spirit awoke, which struggled hard to remove the yoke of an unthinking and fanatical public opinion. The intercourse with Vienna, the Napoleonic wars, and especially the communications with the wide world outside, caused many old forms to fall into abeyance. The spread of the cult of the Chassidim and its presumptuous, outrageous, and increasingly frantic actions, stimulated thoughtful and reasonable men to meet it with firm opposition, for it filled them with passionate hatred, and drove them to invent expedients whereby it could be crushed. The most important thing seemed to be to remove the boorish ignorance which prevailed in religious and secular matters, and the childlike credulity which had arisen through the introduction of the elements of education. Although the Austrian Government had declared it a duty of the Galician congregations to establish schools, the lower officials had not shown much zeal in causing this order to be carried into effect, but this neglect was to some extent advantageous, as the struggles for self-deliverance on the part of the Jews became more persistent. There had arisen since the wars with Napoleon, a small party of educationalists in the three largest Galician communities of Brody, Lemberg, and Tarnopol, who entered actively upon self-culture, the promotion of education, and a war of annihilation against Chassidism. The beginning of this movement was made in Tarnopol by Joseph Perl (born at Tarnopol, 1773; died, 1839). With great sacrifice of time and money, and with unswerving perseverance, he founded a High School for the middle classes, which afterwards served as a pattern for others. He made attacks upon the Chassidim (which were severely felt) in a series of "Letters of Obscure Men," intentionally written in a corrupt and barbarous jargon, which was in no way inferior to the monkish Latin of Rubianus and

Hutten, and perhaps slightly more artistic. This bitter enemy of the Chassidim entered into communication with the Jewish representatives of education in Germany, and was elected an honorary Member of the Berlin Society of Culture. In Brody, where Jews engaged in trade with the whole world, the rich merchants, influenced by their intercourse with Germany and Austria, introduced and imitated the German Jews. In Lemberg, where Rapoport lived, a kind of literary circle was founded, at whose head was a wealthy, highly-cultured man, Jehuda Löb Mises (died 1831). He provided striving young scholars in Lemberg with money, counsel, and, what was of especial value to them, with an excellent library of Hebrew and European books.

From this circle there arose a man who became an admired scholar, and who deserves a golden page in the records of Jewish literature. This was Isaac Erter, who was born in a village near Przemysl, 1792, and died at Brody, 1851. He who without intending it, by means of his magic poetry, could succeed in showing the powers of renaissance that lay dormant in a dead language, also demonstrated the vitality of the race from whose midst such a talented man could arise, be understood, and admired by many people. Erter chiefly desired to scourge the perversity of Polish Judaism, the chaos of superstition and learning, and the coarseness of the Chassidim; and by the earnest and yet artistic manner in which he clothed his scorn and his righteous indignation, he attested the immortality of the Hebrew language and of the Hebrew people. Born in a wretched Galician village, he created beautiful Hebrew pictures such as Isaiah and the most refined Psalmists delighted in. Erter's father, though a poor man, and little more than a peasant, had nevertheless not neglected the sacred duty of a Jew to have his talented son instructed

in Jewish writings. The Talmud was indeed the only work with which young Erter was thoroughly acquainted. Concerning the beauties of Biblical poetry, like all Jews of Poland at that time, he possessed but few ideas in his youth. When he was thirteen years old his father imposed the bonds of marriage upon him, and shortly afterwards, having become a widower, the boy married a second wife. His second father-in-law, who had promised to support him, did not keep his word, and thus Erter was compelled to taste the bread of misery in his youth. In order to rid himself of bitter sufferings he joined the merry Chassidim, taking part in all their follies; but his innate love of the beautiful filled him with disgust at the sight of their evident moral turpitude, nor did he believe in their miracles. A fortunate accident acquainted him with a cultured man, who introduced him to two ideals of enlightenment, Maimuni and Mendelssohn: thus he learned to understand, love, and imitate the highest models, viz., that of the prophet Moses and that of Hebrew literature. A new spirit was breathed into Erter by this old and still ever new revelation, working a change in his thoughts and his relation towards Judaism. In order to increase his knowledge Erter betook himself to Lemberg, where he hoped to find better means for satisfying his thirst for science. Here he actually found struggling fellow-sympathisers of his own age, who like himself had married early, and who found it difficult to maintain themselves, but nevertheless directed all their energies to the cultivation of the mind. Here he met Rapoport, to whom as the more accomplished he looked up with reverence. There was a peculiar charm in the intercourse of these young men thirsting for knowledge, and who regarded each other in the light of master and pupil; they utilised for themselves and others whatever was beautiful and true in European literature, and



translated it into Hebrew; and, in fact, they employed this language as if it were a living one. The difficulties which members of this circle could not overcome were submitted for solution to the wise master, Krochmal, and they made pilgrimages to him at Zolkiew, as to a wizard. This intellectually idyllic life, which they remembered even in their old age as a golden dream, lasted for three years. But their occupation with profane literature and their actions and aims gave great offence. XV

One day a ban of excommunication (in the name of the Rabbi, Jacob Orenstein) was found affixed to the gates of the synagogue. It was directed against four men who by their so-called heretical views had influenced the youth of the town, viz., Rapoport, Erter, Natkes and Pastor. The formal sending of a notice of excommunication, which had been customary in olden days, had been abolished in Galicia since the time of the Emperor Joseph: therefore the zealots chose this method. They determined, when they brought Krochmal under the accusation of heresy, to make a vigorous onslaught upon all apostles of culture. But, seeing that the ban was only directed against these four poor men, and that they dared not attack the wealthy and distinguished Mises, who openly poured ridicule upon Talmudical Judaism, their cowardice only counteracted the effects of their zeal. The sentence of excommunication also did not have the expected result, and Orenstein was compelled by the Austrian authorities to withdraw it. It hardly affected Rapoport, who had taken up an altogether independent, if somewhat inferior position, and who gave gratuitous instruction to young men. In the eyes of the common people, however, he was considered a heretic; but this did not hinder him from becoming District Rabbi of Tarnopol and afterwards Chief Rabbi of Prague. X  
X  
V  
V

Meanwhile, poor Erter was more severely affected

because he had to support himself and his family by teaching. Although the Rabbi was obliged to recall the ban, Erter found that many parents objected to entrust their sons to him, and he had therefore again to take up his staff and journey towards Brody. But he had his revenge upon Orenstein and the zealots: he immortalised their bigotry and pettiness throughout all times by his poetry. Indignation and anger at being persecuted by such tormentors forced him to take up the pen, and gave rise to his masterpieces of delineation. Erter harmed Orenstein with his poetical thunders of excommunication more severely than he himself had been made to suffer, and completely crushed him. In his poem he represented a Court of Justice which determined the value of objects from a standpoint dissimilar to that of the actual world. Books of immense size shrank to nothing because their contents proved, when the ingenious theft was discovered, that they had been stolen from various quarters: only the title-page remaining the property of the author. This satire was aimed at Orenstein, who had published a Rabbinical work in many volumes, which he was supposed to have adorned with productions from the pens of strangers.

It is certain that Börne and Heine would never have credited it had they heard that, hidden away in Poland, among the bearded Jews, there lived a brother artist possessed of talents "to make filigree-work out of the most refined words, to weave a wire-net for the souls of gnats, or to point a satire so keen that it could penetrate through glass." Just as they had improved, refined, and polished the German language, so Erter improved the Hebrew tongue. He breathed youthful vigour and freshness into "the old lady with her silvery hair and wrinkled brow, which still retain traces of her former beauty" (as he says), made her susceptible to the prevailing influences of the day, and

accessible to new thoughts. Was Erter a poet? Certainly in his prose he was a perfect poet. In his pictures, which are highly interesting and yet true to Nature, there is a store of magic poetry and humour, which, like the offspring of Heine's wit, attracts and enchains our minds. X X

Two thousand years after the prophets had ceased, there arose a voice which sounded at the same time both old and new. And in this intermingling of the old and new in the Erterian style, which recall both Isaiah and Heine, there lies an extraordinary charm. Properly translated, Erter's poems would still be sufficiently interesting; but the peculiar, indescribable fragrance of his work would have passed away. In their original form and colour, in the contrast of solemnity and childishness, of sublimity and insignificance, these poetical productions make an incomparably pleasant impression upon minds susceptible to delicate shades of feeling. In perusing these masterly delineations, one only regrets that they are not longer, and that this contemplative artist did not leave behind him more than six of these delightful pictures, and only a few equally beautiful letters. X X

Like a true poet, Erter came too late at the distribution of the world's goods, and had to contend with poverty. When in his thirty-third year, and having already marriageable daughters, he was still studying medicine, in order to earn his daily bread. The time which was spent in efforts to rejuvenate the Hebrew language had to be snatched from hours of sleep; and death hurried him away in the full maturity of his poetical powers. Erter had performed great services for Judaism. Through his proofs of the flexibility of the Hebrew language he awakened a fresh love for it, and created a comparatively new medium for disseminating freshly-aroused Jewish knowledge. His influence upon his brother students is unmistakable. Whilst the



*Hebr*  
*Hebr*  
Hebrew style of Nachman Krochmal is rugged, awkward, and might almost be called stiff, being similar to that of the Tibbonides, whose works read like a translation from a foreign language, Rapoport, Natkes, Jacob Solomon Byk, the Goldbergs, father and son, and the new men of the Galician school, displayed a flow of language, a fluency and ease which was afterwards misused in rendering French novels and plays into Hebrew.

Rapoport, indeed, did not stand altogether alone in Lemberg; he found other friends who participated in his ideas and efforts. It was especially favourable to the development of his mental powers that Krochmal served him as a living book, which contained all that was worth knowing. From the days of his youth until far into manhood, for nearly thirty years, Rapoport made it a practice, at least once a month, to take a journey from Lemberg to Zolkiew, in order to visit the acute, but at the same time timid, philosophical inquirer, Krochmal, and to enter into intellectual conversation with him. This intercourse with his gifted young friend became such a necessity to Krochmal, that whenever he was engaged in a subject of research he sought out Rapoport in Lemberg to interchange ideas, and thus arrive at a clear decision. Rapoport only needed to have a subject suggested to him; he had an inborn taste and love for Jewish history, and as he possessed both scholarship and keen perceptions, he made prolific discoveries. In the interchange of thought between the master and pupil, they came to be in such hearty agreement upon important matters that in the end they did not know from whose mind the idea had emanated, or rather it should be said that they worked unitedly in the solution of problems. It is therefore perplexing to after-generations to know exactly which of the many results of their common investigations are to be ascribed to the master and which to the

pupil. These fruitful conversations between Krochmal and Rapoport marked the birth of Jewish science from its historical standpoint.

In the meantime, despite their combined discoveries, as soon as both grew to full maturity of intellect, the territory of their researches became entirely distinct. Krochmal had more liking for general and encyclopædic studies; each subject served him only as an authentic proof and as a voucher of the truth. Rapoport, on the other hand, was more interested in single occurrences, especially in biographical facts; and general studies were distasteful to him. In his youthful days, Krochmal had already planned a survey of the development of thought in Judaism, bearing upon the varying phases of enlightenment and obscuriation. Rapoport also commenced writing a work in his youth, but this was to be a biography of the most noted representatives of Judaism and its ideas.

As this laborious task demanded a great amount of time and attention, and as Rapoport was not master of his own time, the fruits of his researches ripened but slowly. When, however, he published five biographies (1829—31) in succession, with great fulness of luminous details and suggestions, the pathway for a fundamental knowledge of the internal history of Judaism and of the Jewish race was opened up. Rapoport proved indisputably and upon strictly scientific grounds that the great representative or tone-giving leaders of Judaism in the Middle Ages, instead of shunning the light of knowledge, actually kindled and fed it. He showed how, more especially at a time when European nations were still steeped in the darkness of the Middle Ages, the Jews alone cultivated general science. Chronology, political geography, the history of literature, and numerous other important branches of critical investigation of the course of history, which had hitherto been alto-

gether neglected, or only superficially treated, now for the first time received recognition of their powers of demonstration and their adaptability. The acute intelligence with which he united disjointed and fragmentary facts with others apparently connected; the critical touchstone which he applied to distinguish the true from the false, and facts from legends, produced such extraordinary results for the future that, after Krochmal, he must be considered as the father of Jewish science. All that had been achieved by Jost and other predecessors vanished before these researches like a superficial speech before a well digested, well constructed and clearly conceived oration. What gave these investigations an altogether especial value, and distinguished them from ordinary learned productions, was the fervour and love with which they were undertaken. They must, therefore, be regarded as national performances, and not as evidences of mere scholarship. Judaism, as far as it participated in these labours recognised in the history of its mental development its own work, or the guiding-line to be followed by posterity. Rapoport achieved more for the development of this knowledge than Krochmal, because he did not allow himself to be intimidated by heretic-hunters, and displayed more manly courage for the truths which he discovered, and which are now associated with his name. The scientific movement within Judaism, which since his time has continually grown in force, must be entirely attributed to him. The spring which pours forth water from its bosom, and allows it to trickle down among the bushes unseen is of no significance, compared to the broad stream which is revealed to every eye, bearing upon its surface large ships, overflowing the banks and also fertilizing the adjoining fields. The importance deserved by Rapoport was granted to him; he was elected District Rabbi of Tarnopol, and shortly



afterwards first Rabbi of Prague. Once again was a Pole called to Germany, but under what altered circumstances!

The effects of Rapoport's system of research soon manifested themselves. A scholar of the first rank, who had been slowly piling up brick upon brick for the construction of the internal history of the Jews, one of the Triumvirate of the Berlin Society of Culture, finding consolation in this method of investigation for the unpleasant manner in which his mind had been disabused, utilised Rapoport's results and system of inquiry, in order to shed light upon another page of Jewish history. Zunz, in his "Homilies of the Jews in Divine Worship," reviewed them in their origin, their growth, their sublimity and their degeneration (1832). They portrayed Judaism from another point of view, and brought conclusive proofs that the Jews in the Middle Ages were not a rough, half-savage horde, as was asserted by their bitter enemies, in order to calumniate them and deprive them of their rights of equality; they were not a barbarous fraternity without morals and decency, but a spirited community drawing their culture from their own midst, and taking part in the awakening of general enlightenment.

"From the earliest times we find in the constitution of the Jewish nation, measures for upraising men who are overwhelmed by the sorrows of life, or through error, or who are chained down by their sins and coarse lusts. Sabbath and festivals, sacrifices and holy convocations, common worship and instruction in the Law, were to afford comfort to the sinner, support to the weak, and correction to all, and to preserve a holy flame of faith and patriotism in the midst of the nation, as in the breast of the individual. Centuries have since then passed away, the Jews have lost their independence and fatherland; but on the downfall of every institution the synagogue remained as the sole representative of their nationality. Towards this centre, their faith was directed, and from it they obtained instruction to aid them in their worldly occupations, strength to endure unheard-of sufferings, and hope for a future dawn of freedom. The public worship of the synagogue became the standard of Jewish nationality, the miraculous shield of the Jewish faith."

The form of prayers and sermons were traced

in this work in their manifold shapes from the boundary line of the Bible period and that of the Soferim till the time of their perfection, their decline, and their regeneration. This book was the first solid and convincing work of any Jewish author, and was acknowledged as such by German scholars. It displayed a completeness of facts of which no one had hitherto possessed any inkling, or at least any accurate idea. It therefore made a lasting impression, and awoke great activity in its particular branch of study. It occupies a place of high importance in the erection of the edifice of Jewish science. The "Homilies of the Jews" also favoured two connecting movements—the emancipation of the Jews and the promotion of reform. In supporting these aims it was carefully pointed out and emphasized that during the last century, in Portuguese and Italian congregations, sermons were delivered in the vernacular. But these two movements, emancipation and reform, were not much advanced by its assistance, and in as far as they were realised, this is in no way due to the "Homilies of the Jews." But the scientific basis provided according to the German method, was urgently needed for future investigations, and removed the reproach from Jewish authors that they could not penetrate deeply into any subject.

Newly-fledged Jewish science immediately created new organs by which to express itself. The oldest and most noteworthy was carried on in Hebrew: it was called the "desirable vineyard" (Kerem Chemed), and was founded by Samuel Löb Goldberg of Tarnopol, and during ten years was of great use in defining the different views of Judaism. The chief topic was Jewish history; and the greatest care was bestowed upon this subject. In different ways, either in ability, knowledge, or ripeness of intelligence, the contributors to the "Vineyard" brought their greater

or smaller offerings, without expecting any reward or tangible honour. What High School or Academy could ever repay these laborious researches by the bestowal of a Professor's chair or a post of distinction? No hopes were cherished of obtaining situations as Rabbis for men who were engaged in subjects utterly dissimilar to Rabbinical studies, and who were often opposed to them. On the contrary, the zeal for science rendered them unworthy of Rabbinical honour in the eyes of the strictly orthodox. The chief contributors to the new journal were the leaders of the Galician school, among whom Rapoport held the first place, although he incurred opposition by his candid utterances. Encouraged by Rapoport's example, Krochmal also consented to publish single chapters from his collected works in his own name. The German Jews only supplied two fellow-workers, both of whom were talented men, viz., the author of the "Homilies of the Jews" and the highly esteemed Michael Sachs, who, however much they differed in their conceptions of Judaism, yet each from his own standpoint paid great attention to Jewish science.

The little band of Jewish inquirers received a new reinforcement from Italy, a country which for a long time had been buried in slumber, and had taken but little part in Jewish history. Besides old Reggio, the Rabbi Ghironi of Padua, Almanzi, a wealthy man, and Samuel Vita della Volta, a physician of Mantua, there now came to the front Samuel David Luzzatto (born in Trieste, 1800; died Padua, 1865).

The self-sacrificing efforts of Jewish inquirers in the Middle Ages, who in the midst of unspeakable privations and sufferings had occupied themselves in the cultivation of their minds, were now through Luzzatto to become a pattern to the younger generation. Throughout his whole life, and although he enjoyed a European fame, Luzzatto yet suffered



√ from poverty, together with his family. These privations, however, did not hinder him from increasing his knowledge with an amount of endurance all the more heroic because it was not publicly displayed. To be poor in Poland, as was the case with Rapoport and Erter, was not so distressing as in Italy, because in the former country requirements were less, and contentment on the smallest means was almost universal, besides which wealthy and generous men fostered science and saved those who pursued it from starvation. But in Italy, where even among the middle class it was a necessity to live comfortably, and where indifference to knowledge among the Jews had reached a high pitch, it is a matter for great surprise that Luzzatto could find the necessary rest and quiet amidst his struggles for daily bread, and that he accomplished so much for the promotion of Jewish science. At every discovery, however trifling, Luzzatto felt a childish pleasure which appears strange to an onlooker: it was the self-created concentration of mind which causes the martyr to forget for the moment the gnawing pain from which he is suffering.

Luzzatto was not originally gifted with an aptitude for historical studies. His most conspicuous trait was an enthusiastic love of poetry, Judaism and Hebrew literature, and this threefold love combined within him to become one. But his lofty enthusiasm, united with an extraordinarily delicate taste for poetical beauty, could not compensate him for his lack of creative power; it could bring him no further than to become a more talented "Wessely." The Hebrew verse with which he thought to re-animate Biblical poetry is blameless in form, rhythmical in sound, and of Hebraic colouring; but in this, as in Wessely's verses, the soul was wanting, viz., that of true poetry. √ Luzzatto's Hebrew prose, however beautiful, cannot be com-

pared to the magical language of Erter. This he felt, and was sufficiently just to award the palm to his Galician fellow-artist. His deep comprehension of the true art of poetry, and especially for the delicacy of Biblical literature and his extremely refined taste, opened to Luzzatto another field of labour, viz., the exposition of Holy Writ. To purify the treasures it contains from the rust with which they had become overlaid during thousands of years had hitherto been the task of strangers, who did not bring to this work proper appreciation and still less the needful devotion. Christian Biblical exegetists such as Eichhorn, de Wette, Gesenius and others pursued their work in a clumsy manner, and for want of proof flung away the true ore as dross. Luzzatto was one of the first Jews who in modern days devoted himself to Biblical exegesis. He possessed the necessary test for recognising the true spirit and beautiful form of Biblical literature, and he called attention to the disturbing elements whilst restoring the original ones. No one understood the construction of the Hebrew language even to its most delicate points and grammatical trifles better than he did. In the new Rabbinical College of Padua (the Collegio Rabbinico) Luzzatto found opportunities of engaging zealously in the study of the Bible, and of ascertaining the correct meaning of the words of the prophets and inspired writers. If Luzzatto had remained true to this branch of learning he would have produced splendid results with his power of restoring the language and through his religious fervour; and he could have performed a substantial service to Jewish science, inasmuch as his orthodoxy was unimpeachable. But he became apprehensive of his own keenness, or rather feared that he might misuse it. When the walls of the Massorah would be rent asunder he feared that the sacred text would become a battle-field for incompetence and

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groundless combats, and that everything would fall into the direst confusion. He did not feel sufficient trust in scientific demonstrations to heal the wounds which it inflicted, or rather he feared to effect a cure by administering poison. He therefore took up an equivocal position, and re-erected the outworks of the Massorah which he himself had before undermined.

Roused by the achievements of Rapoport in history he plunged into that study, and produced important results. Owing to the dispersion of the Jews and their tragic fate, the fairest pages of their history during the Franco-Spanish epoch had been lost. Luzzatto's zeal was kindled to discover these pages, and in Italy his efforts were crowned with success. The persecuted Jews from Spain and France had mostly wandered towards Italy. Hither also they had removed the greater part of the treasures of Jewish authorship, but had been compelled to bury them from fear of the Argus-eye of the bloody Inquisition. Luzzatto unearthed them, published and utilized them through the medium of scientific organs or of separate writings. The Jewish history of the Middle Ages received its authentic description, its firm basis, its colouring and clear intelligibility for the first time through him. If Krochmal and Rapoport may be called the fathers of Jewish history, then Luzzatto was its mother.

Through him it became possible to obtain a clear understanding of facts which had hitherto been only vaguely depicted, he arranged them in proper groups, and again represented them in their original splendour. The beginnings of the neo-Hebraic poetry, its flourishing period in the time of Jehuda Halevi, and especially the prolific mental activity of the Jews of Spain, were first set forth by him. And to his last breath, Luzzatto was untiring in his researches and close investigation. He collected a number of valuable writings, and



stimulated other friends of Jewish science to do the same. Unstintingly he published all his discoveries, and was happy when he could benefit the public by his newly discovered treasures. He was a priest in the service of Jewish science, and his memory will never be forgotten in the House of Israel.

Next to the Hebrew organ of Jewish science ("Kerem Chemed") various German journals were also started, which, besides dealing with the topics of the day, also treated of Jewish scientific studies and circulated freely. One of these organs, "The Scientific Journal," from its very commencement assumed an over-confident tone, as if desirous of setting itself up as the highest tribunal, before which all efforts should await judgment, and gain either praise or blame. And yet most of its editors, in so far as they did not prove the contrary, had to acquire the first elements of knowledge. However advanced in years they may now be, they would have to confess, if they wish to be sincere, that on beginning their undertaking, instead of being at the head of Jewish science, they were mere beginners, possessing only a superficial smattering, and that the Galician school was their guide.

The soul of the periodical was its founder, Abraham Geiger (born 1810; died 1874), a man of considerable talents, of clear intellect, penetrating sagacity, comprehensive knowledge, and of a stern character, almost bordering upon obstinacy and defiance. He was also of a weak disposition, and was easily led, and this quality contributed to change what had hitherto only caused differences of opinion concerning Judaism, into the harsh extreme of a split amongst various sects. Although born and bred in a family schooled in the Talmud, Geiger became filled with burning hatred towards it, and seeing that the religious life of the Jews had been hitherto regulated by the Talmudical

standard, he regarded it as the aim of his existence to bring about its deposition and to introduce reforms of so radical a nature that he outstripped his predecessors. The reform of Judaism was Geiger's chief desire; and in order to further it, he used his influence as a preacher and also his scientific researches. He felt no respect for antiquity or for religious practices, and never spared those co-religionists who in their hearts still adhered to existing customs. He did not shrink from effecting the most thorough-going schism and disunion. Geiger's scientific labours did not produce lasting results, as he cared less for inquiries after truth than for plans of reform.

Meanwhile his journal succeeded in stirring up a feeling of self-reliance and self-knowledge. It courageously attacked the shameless presumption of Judæophobists who, like Hartmann, fancied themselves learned, and inveighed against weak-minded Jews who referred all ideals to Christianity. It may be reckoned to the credit of this periodical or this school, that it recalled partially or totally forgotten events and personages, and chief among the latter, the Karaites those talented sceptics or hypocrites.

Through the energy and enthusiasm of the new school, life and action was brought into Jewish circles, and helped to elucidate the results of hardly-won knowledge in various branches. Who can say now whether the gain or the loss to Judaism was greater? Wide-spread errors became current, stamping Judaism as a theology, and making its representatives, the Rabbis and teachers of the law, mere clergymen and pastors. This tendency narrowed Judaism, and in the presence of some phenomena of the past deprived it of those characteristics which had survived for centuries. The new exponents wished forthwith to introduce plans into their every-day life which were but newly con-

ceived, or, as the formula expresses it, "to make the doctrine accord with the mode of life," which meant to sacrifice doctrines not fully understood to the necessities of life in order to obtain civil equality. Science was not in itself an end, but only the means whereby to deprive Judaism of its characteristic peculiarities, and to remodel it to something novel. With the same arbitrary spirit in which Friedländer, Jacobson, and their companions had introduced reforms, the new requirements and aims were now supposed to justify changes as necessities and for scientific reasons. Through this violent and dogmatic attitude, fierce opposition was aroused, and thus the seeds of dissension were scattered in the vineyard of Jacob, although even this result had its favourable side.

The orthodox party, which had hitherto been silent or had raged against innovations, and had not shown any tact, as Bernays expressed it, were now challenged to take up the glove. They altogether denied the necessity for the reform on which the advanced party so greatly prided itself. "The Nineteen Letters on Judaism," by Ben Usiel, a pupil of Bernays (1836), were the first expressions of a powerful opposition against the levelling of Judaism to a commonplace religion, comprising sermons, German hymns and confirmations, and which aimed at restricting the power of religion to the four walls of the synagogue. This was the commencement of a contest from two different stand-points, a strife which has not yet ceased. The struggle was confined to Germany. The Jews of the other European countries were at first not even cognisant of it. In Germany it was so difficult to destroy the old state of ignominy, and so toilsome to obtain the new freedom, that educated Jews, seeing in the peculiarities of their belief one of the obstacles to secure equal privileges, were ready to sacrifice these, trying to persuade themselves that



it was no willing surrender, but merely a shedding of the outer skin. Christian society refused to recognise them as Germans, and, therefore, by stripping off their original garb they desired to show that they were Germans (and not semi-Germans), who only had a distant connection with Judaism. The spirit of subtle inquiry which had been awakened to a high degree, chiefly in Germany, furthered the habit of fault-finding, not alone with individual matters, but with the whole structure of Judaism; of considering it as a work rotten with age, which with the exception of a few foundation-stones ought to be destroyed.

It was strange that far-sighted Christians admired the tents of Jacob in their simplicity and lack of ornament, whilst the adherents of Judaism felt confined in them, and desired to exchange both the Tabernacles and the Ark of the Covenant for the pomp and parade of the Church, or wished to surround them with adornments that would have disfigured them. Two poetically-gifted Christian scholars, astounded by the wonderful fact that the persecuted Jewish people even in modern days possessed the neo-Hebraic poetical art, which had survived the violence of persecution, strove to spread an understanding and love of it in Christian circles. The "History of the neo-Hebraic Poetry" (1836), by Franz Delitzch and the "Hebrew Chrestomathie" (1837), are tokens of homage brought by Christians to the Jewish mind. The authors were astounded at the creative faculty and the power of continuous existence in the Hebrew language, although they only knew fragments, and were unacquainted with the most modern and fairest specimens of neo-Hebraic poetry. This side of Jewish ability convinced them of the immortality of its adherents. "No one can deny," remarked the former, "that the Jewish people is the most remarkable of all nations, and next to

that of the Church, its history and literature deserve the deepest and most devoted attention. Poetry forms a large part of this colossal mass of literature, and is the truest image of the inner history of this people. The elegies of the synagogue reveal to us the constant recurrence of soul-sufferings which God imposed on the exiles, and the impressions which these sufferings have left upon the heart of the nation. The Orient is exiled in the midst of the West, and from the tears of its home-sickness there springs forth Jewish poetry.”

Martinet desired “to ascertain the height, depth, and breadth of the Jewish spirit of our times as shown in the treasures of its own literature,” and was fortunate in having found an ancient, deeply interesting, and in every way excellent fragment. His “Selection” was intended as a vindication of neo-Hebraic literature, and as a posy of beautiful Eastern flowers reared upon Western soil, which he arranged in an odorous bouquet, in order to gain admirers, and induce these to cull radiant garlands of still fairer flowers from the magic garden.

The new school of reform was only slightly influenced by the enthusiasm of appreciative Christians. They regretted that doubts had arisen instead of certainty, and conflicts instead of peace, and that dissensions had sprung up in the place of perfect unity and sincerity. This state of affairs filled all minds with uncertainty and discomfort, creating a state of irritability, and inducing a condition which enervated and destroyed all strength of will. But they themselves had contributed towards this discomfort and ill-feeling, and if they did not actually call it into existence, they sustained and kept it alive. The fanciful idea that the decomposition of Judaism had already commenced carried them so far, that they became finally convinced of it, and like romantic dreamers, indulged in artificial

✓ grief, and suffered artificial pangs. The awakening of self-consciousness and the dawn of knowledge on account of the contest for equalisation, was purchased in Germany at a heavy price, and at the cost of internal disruption and self-torment.

The views of those who, whilst admiring Judaism in its ancient and venerable form, yet entertained doubts as to its continuance, were truthfully represented in "The Complaints of a Jew" (1837). The Prussian Jews at this time were placed in a situation which was both comic and tragical by an ordinance promulgated by King Frederick William III., which was worthy of the Byzantine Court. Instead of the liberty which had been guaranteed to them, if only exceptionally, in certain documents, they were no longer to be officially called "members of the Mosaic faith," but curtly "Jews," and were not allowed to bear Christian names. The police were directed to insist that this law be carried into effect. This method was expected to bring waverers over to baptism. The self-respect of the Jews was not yet sufficiently strengthened for them to endure the intended humiliation with dignity. Many Jews in the large cities, especially in Berlin, who were nearer to the Church than to the synagogue, recognising the intended slight, implored the king to protect them against such undeserved contempt, and mourned as if they were to be again thrust into exile. This comic sadness was depicted after the manner of the Psalms in "The Complaints of a Jew."

✓ "The children of my people came to me complaining and weeping. The old men and the mothers drew near, and anxious suffering was depicted on their countenances. I asked the little ones, 'Why are you weeping so early in life?' and to the elders I said, 'Why are you complaining so late in life?' The children lisped, 'Alas! we may no longer bear the bright, beautiful names of the Christians, but have to use the dull and hateful ones of the Jews. We shall be pointed at, even when at play.' And the old men said, 'The quiver of anger is again emptied out, and threatens our children with misery and danger.' Then I replied, . . . 'Comfort yourselves, remain quiet, and bear proudly the proud names of your fathers. They are the names of heroes, of martyrs crowned with fame, of an ancient nobility, of an



ancient knighthood. . . . When the West was still sunk in utter barbarism, then your names flourished in immortal splendour, ruling the world, and enlightening and delivering it. For this I say unto you, that before the hand of the clock of history turns round, many empty names of the West will be swept off the face of the earth like stubble before the sharp scythe. But as long as time endures there will always remain royally enthroned the names of Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah."

Joel Jacoby, the son of a strictly orthodox father, introduced into his "Complaints of a Jew" many untrue outpourings of fantastic sentimentality and a feigned sense of pain. But some of his elegies are full of life and beautifully constructed.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE YEAR 1840 AND THE BLOOD ACCUSATION AT DAMASCUS.

Mehmet Ali—Ratti Menton—Damascus—Father Tomaso—His Disappearance—Blood Accusation against the Jews of Damascus—Imprisonment of Accused—Their Tortures and Martyrdom—Blood Accusation in Rhodes—In Prussia—Adolf Cremieux—Meeting of English Jews—Moses Montefiore—Nathaniel de Rothschild—Merlato, the Austrian Consul—Plots—Thiers—Steps taken by the Jews in Paris and London—Bernard van Oven—Mansion House Meeting—Montefiore, Cremieux and others sent to Egypt—Solomon Munk.

1840.

IF Joel Jacoby wavering between faith and apostasy, thus addressed Judaism, "Feeble is thy body, my people, and thy spirit weary: therefore do I bring to thee a coffin and dedicate to thee a tomb"; and if Geiger's paper, half in pain and half in spite, testified that "the bond which used to hold and keep together the congregations is torn asunder, and now they are only externally united, the will-power of the community is broken," they both represented their heart's desire as if it were already realised or they themselves were greatly deceived. Superficial observers, self-willed opinionists, they thought the symptoms of rapid growth were signs of swift consumption, and praised their own quack medicines as capable of hastening the imminent dissolution.

An unforeseen event, insignificant at the beginning, but of vast importance in its results, exposed and punished the false prophets and quack doctors, and bound together the members of Judaism in an indissoluble bond. This bond is still strong, and

though unseen by and even unknown to them, continues to surround them, and joins all in a patriotic determination to resist attacks upon Judaism, uniting the hearts of the reformer and the orthodox, the politician who appears to have forsaken his faith, and the recluse engrossed only in the Kabbala or the Talmud, alike in frivolous France or in serious Asia. Strangely enough, the despised "Jewish Question" became again interwoven in the complicated threads of European and Asiatic politics, and the Russian despot Nicholas, as also the American Republic, both took up the cause of the Jews in Damascus. He who remembers this time and the incidents attending it, and can appreciate the marvels of history, cannot ignore the wonderful intermingling of events. An Italian, Ratti Menton, naturalised in France, a reckless and unconscientious fortune-hunter, a renegade, who had passed over from Christianity to Islam, a thorough knave and bitter Jew-hater; Hanna Bachari Bey, a man of like calibre; Mohammed El-Telli, who threatened a rich Jew in Damascus with a blood accusation unless he relieved him of his difficulties by advancing sums of money; and finally a Christian Arab, Schibli Ajub, a worthless wretch (charged by a Jew who had been thrown into prison with embezzlement), and who panted for revenge; this is the list of fiendish men who originated a new and bloody drama, in which the part of martyrs was once more played by the Jews. But their sufferings only conduced to arouse feelings of exaltation and proud self-reliance.

Political events, as will be shown, serve as a ground-plan for this drama. The cunning Mehmet Ali, Pasha of Egypt, by his splendid victories had wrested all Syria and Palestine from the rule of his feudal lord, the Turkish Sultan. He oppressed the inhabitants of these countries more severely than those of his own Pashalik, in order



to fill his coffers. Louis Philippe, the equally cunning and so-called Citizen King, in order to disarm the resentment of the legitimate princes of Europe, supported Mehmet Ali's plans of conquest, and French agents aided the robbery system of Egypt. These intrigues increased when the strong-minded but unfortunate Sultan Mohammed was dead, and his weak and pampered son, Abdul Meg'id, only seventeen years old, ascended the throne (July, 1839). Then the Eastern Question commenced to wax warm. Russia supported the enfeebled state of Turkey in order that it should not fall into the arms of Mehmet Ali. France, on the other hand, supported the Egyptian robber, in order to checkmate Russia. Austria and England were unsettled in their policy, and Prussia was the fifth wheel in the van of the European Pentarchy. Owing to the close union between Louis Philippe and Mehmet Ali, the Christians in Palestine and Syria, hitherto oppressed, could now raise their heads. France was now willing to play the part of protector to Christianity in the East to gain a title and power, whilst coquetting with the Clerical Party, so as to suppress the friends of liberty. The clergy and monks of many Orders in the East, especially the Catholics or Latins, who had until lately been amongst the oppressed, now, relying upon French protection, became the oppressors.

In Damascus, which at that time contained five thousand Jewish families, or about twenty thousand souls, there disappeared one day (February 5th, 1840) the guardian of a Capuchin Cloister, Father Tomaso (Thomas), of Sardinia, together with his servant. He was no saint in the Catholic sense of the word, but an ordinary man of the world, more ready to take than to give money. He pottered in medicine and especially occupied himself with vaccinating persons afflicted with small-pox, and as often visited in Jewish and

Mahometan as in Christian quarters. What had become of the Pater so well known to the whole populace of Damascus? No one knew exactly. There was a rumour that Tomaso had some days before quarrelled with a Turkish mule-driver, who was said to have sworn, "This Christian dog shall die by no other hand than mine." They had then proceeded to acts of violence. As soon as it was known that the Guardian Father had disappeared, and that he had probably met with a violent death, the monks besieged the unscrupulous Ratti Menton, the French Consul in Damascus, with entreaties to find the murderer. Attention was immediately directed to the Jews, some of them having innocently said that Tomaso and his servant had been seen in the Jewish quarter, on the evening before they disappeared. The monks, and chief among them a fanatical Jew-hater, Father Tusti, quickly caught up the suspicion against the Jews, hoping thereby to gain their own ends. They could satiate their hatred upon the Jews, suppress the inquiry as to whether Pater Tomaso had indeed quarrelled with Mussulmans and been reviled by them, and finally a new martyr, slain by the Jews, could be added to their list of saints, which was always a source of profit. Ratti Menton, from interested motives, at once suspected the Jews, and relinquished every other idea, although a clue had been given by the fact that the Turkish merchant, who had quarrelled with the Pater, had hanged himself. Sherif Pasha, the Governor of Damascus, readily permitted and joined in the persecution of the Jews from a desire to be on friendly terms with the French Consul, and hoping also to obtain some important profit from a blood accusation against the Jews. In order to save appearances, the accusers quoted the evidence of a pious juggler, who assured them that Tomaso and his servant were murdered in the

Jewish quarter in such and such a house. This trick was probably brought about by Bachari Bey. The Turkish rascal, Mohammed El-Telli, offered his services as a spy to Ratti Menton, if he would free him from prison and debt. He willingly consented, for the two scoundrels were worthy of each other.

Confirmatory rumours soon accumulated. Christians said they had heard the Jews say, "Let us shut the gates and remain out because danger is imminent," or they had seen the monk shortly before his disappearance in the house of a Jew. The bill of accusation was quickly prepared: "The Jews have murdered Tomaso and his servant in order to use the blood for their Passover Festival," as though they would be so ridiculous as to keep it for six weeks! Efforts were also made to arouse the Christians and the Turkish populace. Several Jews were arrested, brought before Ratti Menton, and examined. A poor Jewish barber during his examination, being terrified in the presence of the spies, showed great confusion. But he firmly denied any participation in, or knowledge of, the murder of the missing monk. Nevertheless the French Consul handed him over for trial to Sherif Pasha, as being strongly suspected. The latter ordered him to receive the bastinado, five hundred blows with a stick upon the soles of his feet. This torture, however, appeared far too mild to Ratti Menton. The poor barber was subjected to the cruellest tortures, but remained steadfast. He was then visited in prison by Mohammed El-Telli, who was also in prison for debt. Induced by deceitful speeches, the barber, afraid of fresh torture, agreed to name the guilty persons. He named, upon suggestion, seven of the most distinguished and wealthiest Jews, David Arari (Harari), with his son and brothers, then Moses Abulafia, Moses Saloniki and Joseph Laniado,



an old man of eighty years. When they were arrested and examined they denied their guilt. The bastinado was resorted to, but the executioners fearing that the old men would sink under the blows, and that confessions thus extorted would not be accepted, employed another method of torture. The accused, guarded by soldiers, were compelled to stand erect for thirty-six hours, without food or drink, and without being allowed to go to sleep. As this torture bore no result, the bloodthirsty villains proceeded to inflict violent strokes with a rod, at the suggestion of Ratti Menton; and at the twentieth blow the unhappy men fell powerless to the ground. The French Consul nevertheless ordered the scourging to be continued when they revived.

As all this however did not wring forth a confession, Sherif Pasha invented a new species of torment, or employed one suggested to him. More than sixty children between the ages of three and ten were torn away from their parents, shut up in a room and deprived of food, so that the mothers, stricken with agony at the piteous cries and sufferings of the children, should be driven to make confessions, even though these might be untrue. This means also failed. In spite of compassion for their children, the Jewish mothers did not confirm the horrible accusation in any way. Only one woman and her daughter at the sight of the sufferings, and from love of their children so brutally treated, became converted to Islam. Sherif Pasha became enraged, and threatened that if the Father were not found many Jewish heads should fall. With a band of soldiers (18th February) he marched into the Jewish quarter, and commanded the magnificent house of David Arari to be destroyed, in order to find the corpse of the monk or even some suspicious traces. The houses of the other accused were also razed to the ground. Moved with dis-

tress at so much cruelty, a Jewish youth volunteered to go to the Pasha and give evidence that he had seen Father Tomaso enter the shop of a Turk shortly before his disappearance. Instead of following this clue, Ratti Menton and his private secretary, Baudin, tried to hush up the evidence. The youth was unmercifully flogged, and in the same night died as the first martyr in this tragedy.

Ratti Menton was inexhaustible in his devices for extorting some kind of confession from the Jews. He ordered an experiment to be tried upon David Arari's Turkish servant, Murad el Fallat. This man had nothing to confess, and was scourged till his body was dreadfully lacerated. Mohammed El-Telli then interviewed him, and by mingling friendly overtures and threats obtained some information from him. The servant accused himself of having murdered Tomaso at the command of David Arari in the presence of the other prisoners; and the Jewish barber was persuaded to confirm this statement. Ratti Menton then caused the two mutilated men to be led to a place where the bones and skulls were supposed to have been thrown into a canal. He found a piece of bone and a fragment of cloth; Christian doctors explained that this bone belonged to a human body, and that the patch was part of the cowl of the monk. Positive proof of the murder having been thus found in the Jewish quarter, the seven accused were again examined and subjected to cruel tortures. They were asked to produce the flask of blood taken from the murdered men for the Passover Festival. The tortures killed the old man Joseph Laniado. Moses Abulafia, in order to escape further torture, assumed the turban. The others, worn out by suffering, said all that was demanded of them; they had become weak and only desired a speedy death. Their confession, however, did not help them much. The French Consul wanted tangible evidence, such as the flask

of blood and other proofs. But the poor prisoners, however ready to do so, were unable to produce them.

New tortures were applied, the only result being that the wretched victims retracted their former confessions. As Ratti Menton desired to obtain new victims, Arari's servant was required to assist in supplying them early in March. Suspicion turned upon other distinguished Jewish families upon the wealthy family of Farchi (Parchi), upon a young man named Isaac Levi Picciotto (Peixotto) and upon Aaron Stambuli. Three Rabbis of Damascus — Jacob Anteri, Solomon and Asaria Halfen, had been already arrested, and tortured without the desired evidence being obtained. Among the distinguished Jews said to be implicated in the charge of murder, only two could be found; these were Raphael Murad Farchi who, owing to his high position as Consul, thought himself safe, and Picciotto, the nephew of the Consul-General of Aleppo, who had been knighted for his services by the Austrian emperor. Picciotto alone remained steadfast, and boldly upbraided Ratti Menton and the Pasha with the inhumanity of their conduct. He was protected by the Austrian Consul, an Italian named Merlato, who despite all threats and arguments, refused to allow an Austrian subject to be tortured without substantial proofs of his guilt. This new complication produced a change in the horrifying drama. Merlato had looked on calmly at the inhuman acts for a long time, like the other European Consuls, especially the English Consul named Werry, who cordially agreed with Ratti Menton's proceedings. But at length Merlato's patience was exhausted; he openly attacked the barbarous and horrible proceedings. Consequently he had to endure a good deal of abuse. The whole Christian populace heaped curses upon him because he defended the Jews, and would not



surrender his protégé Picciotto into the hands of the cannibals. His house was surrounded by spies, and the Mahometan mob was also cunningly instigated against the Jews.

Ratti Menton was indeed indefatigable in inventing new charges and pretended proofs. He ordered a book of lies by Lucio Ferrajo directed against the Jews, and which had been shown him by the monks, to be translated into Arabic. In this book it was stated from the Talmud that the Jews used blood, that they slew Christian children, and had outraged the Host, which afterwards worked miracles. This book, when translated into Arabic, was given by Ratti Menton to Sherif Pasha, and circulated among the Mahometan populace. In order to set on foot a thorough-going persecution, Franciscus of Sardinia, a venomous Capuchin monk, was brought to Beyrout, being well known for his ability to give an appearance of truth to perversions and falsehoods. The Pasha then commanded that the three imprisoned Rabbis be brought before him separately, and directed them to translate into Arabic certain objectionable passages in the Talmud, with the threat of death if they tried to deceive him. Thoughtful Turks certainly shook their heads at this systematic persecution of the Jews; but they held their peace. Ratti Menton ended the farce by passing judgment as if it had been incontrovertibly proved, that the arrested and tortured Jews were the murderers of Father Tomaso. Those who were still alive were sentenced to be beheaded. Sherif Pasha obtained the assent of his lord, Mehmet Ali, to this deed.

As if to give an air of justification to the blood-accusation against the Jews, and to create some show of justice for their destruction as blood-thirsty cannibals, there occurred a similar crime about the same time in the island of Rhodes, which belonged to Turkey. A boy ten years of age, the

son of a Greek peasant, had hanged himself, and the Christians hastened to charge the Jews with his murder. The European Consuls took the matter in hand, and demanded of the governor, Jussuf Pasha, a strict investigation against the Jews. Upon the evidence of two Greek women that the boy had been followed by a Jew of Rhodes, the man was arrested, tried, imprisoned, and, because of his denial, inhumanly tortured. His nostrils were pierced by an iron wire, red-hot coals placed upon his head, and a heavy stone upon his breast. This was done or approved by Europeans and Christians, Consuls of the European powers, of England, France, and Sweden. The Austrian Consul alone again took no part whatever in this barbarity. The torture was applied to the accused Jew by his officers without the knowledge of the Pasha. The confession which they desired to obtain from the man was that he had killed the Greek boy in order to send his blood to the Chief Rabbi at Constantinople. There was a sort of conspiracy of Christians in Turkey against the Jews, so as to bring them to the edge of the precipice. This, perhaps, was due to envy, because the young Sultan, Abdul Meg'id, on ascending the throne, in his congratulatory address (Hatti-Scherif of Gulhane) had conceded equal privileges to all subjects of his kingdom, Jews included. The Greeks and Latins in Turkey thought but little of their acquired freedom as long as it was shared by the hated Jews.

Owing to the cruel torture inflicted, the half lifeless Jew in Rhodes made a confession. He incriminated several Jews in the murder of the boy, hoping that they would already have fled from fear of persecution. But some of those named were still found in Rhodes. As in Damascus, they were incarcerated, tortured, and brought near to death's door. Nevertheless they remained firm. The Consuls then ordered the Ghetto to be closed, so that no one

should be allowed to pass out, and that the Jews should be unable to lay their complaints before the Pasha, or even before the Sultan. For three days the Jews received no food from outside. The Greeks crawled near to the Ghetto to throw in bones, saying that they were the bones of a murdered Christian. The Austrian Consul, who at first had taken the part of the Jews, was ultimately induced to join their enemies.

In consequence of this double accusation, a perfect storm arose against the Jews in Syria and Turkey. In Djabar, near Damascus, the mob broke into the synagogue, pillaged and destroyed it, and tore the scrolls of the Law to shreds. In Beyrout the Jews were protected from ill-treatment by the interposition of Lauvilla, the Dutch Consul, and Sason, the Prussian Consul. The spirit of enmity spread as far as Smyrna, and was attended by many actual attacks upon the Jews.

Was it a mere accident that at the same time (beginning of March, 1840) a blood accusation against the Jews was raised in Rhenish Prussia, in Jülich? A Christian girl, nine years of age, asserted that a Jew had stabbed her. Her little brother, six years old, confirmed her statement. A foreign Jew and his wife, who happened to be journeying through Jülich, were recognised by the children as the criminals, and the girl added that the Jew at the same time had killed an old Christian man with a knife. If truth speaks from the mouth of children, this Jew would have been sentenced as a murderer of Christians, and a blood-sucking vampire. If the torture had been applied, an avowal of the crime would have probably been extorted from the Jew and his wife. But a strict judicial inquiry was made, with the result that the statements of the children were found to be idle falsehoods and deception. The Christian supposed to have been murdered was alive. The pretended wound



on the girl's body had only been smeared with blood. The accused Jew was forthwith acquitted, and the Public Procurator himself referred to a rumour which charged two Christians from Düsseldorf with having drummed into the children's heads these horrible accusations.

In Rhenish Prussia the truth and innocence of the Jews were quickly brought to light. In Damascus and Rhodes, on the other hand, the accusations continued for a long time, because fiendish European Christians had intentionally woven such a net-work of lies, that even harmless persons were deceived. In vain did the ill-treated Jews wring their hands and turn for aid to those of their European brethren who were more fortunately situated. It was extraordinarily difficult to bring the truth to light and to unmask villainy. Religious fanaticism, Judæophobia, and political party passions all combined to assist the triumph of falsehood. The underhand plotters employed the art of Guttenburg—whose four hundredth jubilee was then being celebrated—in order to circulate accusations throughout the world that all Jewdom were eager drinkers of Christian blood.

Ratti Menton arranged that a report from Damascus inserted in the French journals according to his own ideas and colouring, should inform the European world that the Jews had murdered a priest and his servant, and had collected the blood for making their unleavened bread for the Pass-over. The corpse of one man had been thrown into the canal in their quarter, and the other had been cast into the cellar of a Jew. They had even confessed, acknowledging that they had committed the crime in order to celebrate the mysteries of their religion. Without Ratti Menton's zeal the culprits would not have been discovered, and without his interposition the Jewish quarter and all its inhabitants would have been destroyed. Not only

did the newspapers in the interests of the Catholic clergy zealously spread this charge against the Jews, but the Liberals in order to glorify the power of France in the East, published as facts all the statements from Damascus, which had been purposely distorted. The eyes of Europe being at this time directed towards the entanglements in Turkey, the false reports rapidly spread through the currents of European journalism. The hatred of the Middle Ages against the Jews could have been easily re-awakened, and might have caused scenes of blood to be re-enacted. The Jews of Europe were filled with horror that in the broad daylight of the nineteenth century they had still to contend against the dark spectre of the blood accusation, so that it might not drag them down into the grave.

The Press, which had been freely used by their adversaries, was now employed in a greater degree to assist in the cause of the Jews. Calumnies and lying accusations against them could no longer as before be concealed under the veil of secrecy. There were courageous Jews who tore off the mask of virtue from falsehood and hypocrisy. Such a man was Adolf Cremieux (born 1796, died 1880), who shortly before this time had been celebrating triumphs of eloquence. This extraordinary man was destined, as will be shown, to become the bold and powerful advocate of the Jews in their tribulation. The false charges brought against them in Damascus made him their advocate and induced him to take an active part in the history of his co-religionists. Cremieux, who, among the many talented orators of France, was considered an exceptionally fine speaker, employed his great gifts in the defence of innocent prisoners, without distinction of creed, position, or party. Although Cremieux was at this time a Member of the Franco-Jewish Consistory, and had not hitherto troubled himself much with Jewish affairs, his soul

was filled with patriotism for France. But the blood accusation at Damascus, which had been spread far and wide by the opponents of the Jews first reminded him of his Jewish origin, and inspired him with courage and zeal to take up the cause of his brethren in religion and race, and developed in him a glowing patriotism for Judaism. At the first news of the dark proceedings in Damascus, and thoroughly convinced that the Eastern like the European Jews were free from the charge of blood, Cremieux hastened to the French Minister to ask him whether the Government had any knowledge of the matter. The Minister replied that he had not received the slightest information on the subject from the Consul or from any other source. Thus it was made evident how this game was played. With all the glowing fire of his eloquence and the courage instilled by a righteous cause, Cremieux set about opposing the wide-spread slanders which echoed through France (7th April), and became the centre of a patriotic movement on the part of the French communities. Cremieux was then Vice-President of the Central Consistory; and the Jews of France looked to him, their appointed representative, to rend asunder the network of lies which extended from Damascus to France.

Like the French Jews, those of England also felt themselves suddenly aroused. By their wealth and honourable conduct they stood very high in public opinion. Some had been elected to fill the honourable post of Sheriff or Justice; and it was to be expected that they would soon be admitted into Parliament. The most distinguished Jews of England, among whom were Baron Nathaniel Rothschild and Sir Moses Montefiore (who from a pious sentiment had undertaken a pilgrimage to the Holy Land), Salomons, and the highly-esteemed brothers Goldsmid, held a meeting (21st April), and resolved to appeal to the Governments



of England, France, and Austria, praying them to use their influence to put a stop to the inhuman proceedings in Damascus. Cremieux came to London, and was present at a meeting for considering a common course of action. It was a praiseworthy action of prominent Jews to take up the cause of their persecuted brethren, and by defending their doctrines and those of the Talmud to prove the purity of Judaism. On the same day (1st May), as Cremieux presented himself before Louis Philippe, King of France, a Jewish deputation waited on the English Minister, Lord Palmerston, in order to obtain the protection of these two countries for the victims in Damascus.

Louis Philippe replied with much feeling :

“ I do not know anything about the occurrence ; but if there are any unfortunate Jews who appeal to the protection of my Government, and if anything can be effected by its means, I will conform with your wishes.”

Whether this asseveration was seriously meant on the part of this diplomatic monarch cannot be known. A Vice-Consul was, however, appointed to visit Damascus, investigate the matter and draw up a report. But he was only a subordinate, as was soon evident, and dared not oppose Ratti Menton, nor could he easily deceive him. The answer of Lord Palmerston was more straightforward. He promised the Jewish deputation, who laid before him full proofs of the innocence of the accused at Damascus and Rhodes, that he would empower the English Ambassador at Constantinople, as also the Consul at Alexandria, to use every effort to check the continuance of such cruelties. In another less public, but more effective quarter, steps were taken to obtain the favourable support of Vienna and the Austrian Cabinet. The Austrian Consul in Damascus, Merlato, was the only one who saw through the wickedness of Ratti Menton, his assistants, and the monks, and with true soldierly

courage offered a firm resistance to them. For this reason he was abused by his opponents both in the East and West; they decried him as a Jew in order to throw suspicion upon his defence of the Jews, and thus destroy its effects. But Merlato felt himself morally pledged to plead the innocence of the Jews as a personal matter. In order to demonstrate their innocence, he issued a faithful and comprehensive report of the groundless attacks made by the mob upon the victims at Damascus. This narrative, which was a defence of his conduct in protecting Picciotto, he despatched to his superior, the Consul-General of Egypt, and it was sent by the latter as a correct account to Metternich, the Austrian Minister. Although adverse to publicity, Metternich had yet allowed all writings favourable to the Jews to be circulated in the newspapers. In this report Ratti Menton, whom the Clerical intriguers had glorified as an angel of light, was shown to be an evil demon. A revolution ensued in public opinion which filled the Jews with courage, and foreshadowed the triumph of justice. Metternich's intervention in this matter arose either from his own impulse, from displeasure at the cruelty practised, or from political hostility to France and a desire to break its power in the East, or, perhaps, out of complaisance to the house of Rothschild, whose members were extraordinarily zealous on behalf of their co-religionists in this affair. At any rate, Metternich encouraged the Austrian agents in Egypt and Syria to stand up boldly in defence of the Jews.

In Constantinople, at the divan of the Sultan, the representatives of European Governments friendly to the Jews, demanded a revision of the trial for blood accusation in the island of Rhodes. Jewish deputies had at length succeeded in arriving at Constantinople from Rhodes. Nathaniel de Rothschild also betook himself thither, and as a

result Abdul Meg'id issued a Firman (July 27th) that the Greek populace should send to the capital three primates as accusers, and that the Jews should send representatives as defendants. A special tribunal, under the presidency of Risaat Bey, was then appointed to inquire into the matter, the result being that Jussuf Pasha was dismissed from his post of Governor of Rhodes, and that the Jews charged with child-murder were acquitted. Further, they were allowed to demand compensation for the sufferings which they had endured from those who had unjustly condemned them, viz., from some of the European Consuls. In three months—from the beginning of May till towards the end of July—this affair was settled.

With Mehmet Ali there were greater difficulties to be encountered. He had indeed, as early as the beginning of April, promised the Austrian Consul-General Laurin to put an end to the atrocities; but this was prevented by the French Consul-General, Cochelet, and, as all depended upon France, he could not quarrel with the agents of the French Government. But Laurin, acting on the instructions of Metternich, was untiring in his efforts to withdraw the Pasha of Egypt from the net of the French intriguers. At his instigation the Jews of Alexandria presented an eloquent and spirited address to Mehmet Ali. It was indeed a great marvel that the Egyptian Jews did not receive the bastinado for thus speaking the truth, but Mehmet Ali knew who supported them. A special letter of Metternich to the Pasha produced a wonderfully favourable effect. In the settlement of the Eastern Question, the latter could not afford to break with Austria, from which country reinforcements for the Sultan could be obtained quicker than from France.

3. Mehmet Ali thereupon ordered a Court of Justice to be formed, consisting of the Consuls of



Austria, England, Russia, and Prussia to carry on the trial according to European usages. The tribunal was empowered to dispatch a Commission to Damascus, and in that town to establish an impartial examination of witnesses. An order was sent to Damascus to Sherif Pasha commanding him to discontinue the torture of prisoners, and to stop the persecution of the Jews. In order to suppress any riotous outbreak of the Christians, whose rage had been strongly aroused in Damascus, eight hundred soldiers were sent thither. The matter now assumed a favourable aspect, showing that the truth would be ultimately vindicated. The four Consuls nominated as Chief Judges, who were diffident of their ability to conduct so complicated a trial, turned for aid to Vienna, and four German judges, well versed in criminal law, offered to investigate the matter, but a political interlude interrupted the proceedings which had been initiated.

A secret war was waged between the overwise king, Louis Philippe, and his still cleverer statesman Thiers, then holding the Minister's portfolio, and whose little person so thwarted the king that he kept the Minister as much as possible at arm's length. Just at this time (in May) a trick had been played on the king by Thiers, as a result of which he was made President of the Cabinet. The little "fly," as he was called, began to hum and buzz, behaving as if he could acquire the Rhine as French property, and settle the Eastern Question according to the views of France. In order to secure a majority in the Chamber, Thiers was forced to gain the good graces of the Clerical party, who were especially strong in the Chamber of Peers. Thus it happened that no strict investigation into the Damascus affair could be permitted, in order that the brutal behaviour of Ratti Menton and the monks might not be brought to light. It was moreover a slight upon France that its Consul

should be excluded from the new Court of Justice which had been formed. Besides this Thiers was not friendly with the financial world, that is with the Rothschilds, and he desired to strike a blow at them in order to make them yield. The French Consul-General Cochelet, in Alexandria, received instructions from Thiers to stay the hand of Mehmet Ali, and prevent the misdeeds in Damascus from being brought to light. The Egyptian Pasha, confused by Thiers' plotting, obeyed his orders, and withdrew the promise made to the four Consuls. Thus the drama which already seemed to be approaching a conclusion was again prolonged, but its end was not favourable to Thiers and his protégés.

Jews of every shade of opinion had become possessed of sufficient independence to defy the prevarications of a Minister or of a Consul. Achille Fuld, who was only bound to Judaism by a slender tie, as also the strictly orthodox Hirsch Lehren in Amsterdam, both regarded it as their duty to take a bold part in the defence of their persecuted co-religionists in Syria. In the French Chamber of Deputies (2nd July) Fuld interpellated Thiers so sharply that the latter was forced to make excuses.

"The Consul of France had ordered the torture, and since the French nation had followed the rule of 'equality in the eyes of the law' as well as in religious matters, a Frenchman countenanced this exception to the rule, employed torture, and thus supported the executioners of the Pasha. This behaviour was so deeply resented by the other European agents that the French Ambassador was excluded from the Council which had been established, because he was the accuser, whilst the others were the defending advocates."

To this statement Thiers was compelled to reply, but each word he uttered sounded like a falsehood. Two Christian deputies took part in this discussion about the Jews. Count Delaborde, who had travelled in the East, highly praised the Jews of Turkey, and stated that they rejoiced in the well-

deserved respect accorded to them, and that, like Lamartine, he had received the most hearty and generous hospitality from their wealthy members. To counteract Thiers' positive assertion that he was in possession of papers which proved the innocence of Ratti Menton, another deputy, Isambert, produced a report drawn up by the apostolical missionary, the successor of Father Tomaso, which stated "that the exertions and zeal of the French Consul in torturing the Jews of Damascus surpassed all comprehension." The Chamber of Deputies, however, did not pass a vote of censure upon the Minister, a measure opposed to the courteous character of the French nation, but the looks of the deputies condemned him. Thiers felt such discomfort that he made a petty attack upon the Jews, "who had stirred up a storm throughout Europe, asking the assistance of the Ministers of every State, and had thus shown that they possessed more influence than was asserted."

It was urged that the Jews should unite and develop especial activity, seeing that the strong Church-Catholic party in France, Italy, and Belgium had formally conspired, or received a hint from headquarters to enshroud in darkness the events which had taken place in Damascus, and to represent the Jews in the East and in Europe as murderers and cannibals. Throughout Italy no papers in favour of the Damascus victims or against Ratti Menton were allowed to be printed: the censorship, which was under the care of the clergy, forbade it. A French journal had challenged the baptised Jews to state upon oath and to the best of their knowledge, whether they had ever found among their former co-religionists or in Jewish writings, the slightest trace or precept concerning the abominable crime imputed to the unhappy people in Damascus. Several Jews who had been converted to Protestantism, and even held



posts in the Church, asserted the innocence of the Jews of this crime—amongst others, Augustus Neander, known as the Church historian and a man of tender conscience. No Catholics, with the exception of one man, came forward to do so. Perhaps they were compelled to remain silent. The Clerical enemies of the Jews now published a fresh accusation, that the Talmud, which the European Jews knew and studied, might indeed be free from passages hostile to Christians and advising the shedding of blood, or that they may have been expunged from the copies out of fear, but that the Jews of the Orient, under Turkish rule, still possessed the Talmud in its original form, which was full of hatred against all men, and especially against Christians.

Thus the Jews were forced to establish a bond of truth against the untrue, to make public the innocence of the martyrs in Damascus, and at the same time attest the purity of their own doctrines; in short, they had to help themselves. The French Central Consistory, which had received solemn promises from Louis Philippe, now saw itself deceived in its hopes. Cremieux was compelled to make the painful statement to his brethren, "France is against us." The urgent cries of the Jews from Damascus, Beyrout, Alexandria, and Constantinople in letters to the Rothschilds, to Moses Montefiore, Cremieux, and Hirsch Lehren in Amsterdam, made it apparent that it was necessary for prominent European Jews to repair to the scene of action, in order to obtain more effective results. The Central Consistory therefore determined to send an emissary, with an escort, to Alexandria, whose burning eloquence might gain the favour of Mehmet Ali. Entrusted with this dangerous and honourable mission, Cremieux entered into communication with the heads of the Jewish community in London.

Here a committee of the noblest and most distinguished Jews had been formed, including Montefiore and Rothschild, who, in a meeting held in the vestibule of a synagogue (15th June), passed the following important resolution, that Montefiore, accompanied by a friend chosen by himself, should undertake the journey to Egypt together with Cremieux, "by means of his weighty influence and his zeal to represent the Jews of England at the Court of the Pasha, and to defend their persecuted brethren in the East." It was also determined at this meeting to collect large sums of money, because it was seen that they would be wanted, not indeed as bribes in the pending trial at Damascus, but in order that large rewards might be offered in order to discover the murderer of Father Tomaso. A thousand pounds sterling were offered as a reward for the discovery of the criminal. The readiness of the Jews to contribute was on this occasion again manifested in a most conspicuous manner. Poor men contributed as well as millionaires, and gave their mite towards the just cause. The committee also determined that unfalsified public opinion, as it exists in England, should make itself heard in Parliament on behalf of the Jews, and Sir Robert Peel, who exercised great influence, undertook this task.

The sitting of the English Parliament in the House of Commons (22nd June) affords an interesting contrast to the sitting of the French Chamber of Deputies at the same time and upon the same subject. Peel rightly introduced the questions to the Ministers with the words, "that it was merely necessary to mention the matter in the Lower House in order to facilitate the task of attaining the great ends of justice and humanity." Lord Palmerston answered in a totally different manner to Thiers:

"He had already directed the English Consul-General, Hodges, to represent to Mehmet Ali what effect the knowledge of such atrocities

must produce in Europe, and that it was in his own interest to inquire into the matter, so that the guilty parties, if they were discovered, should be handed over to punishment, whilst the innocent victims should be indemnified if this were still in any way possible. He (Lord Palmerston) had also sent instructions to Her Majesty's Consul in Damascus to make a thorough investigation into all that had taken place, and to send home an exact report as to the part which the European Consuls had taken in the matter."

The air of England rendered susceptible to feelings of liberty even those who were accustomed to elevate the slavery of body and mind to the rank of a dogma. O'Connell, the fiery Irish agitator for the emancipation of the Catholics in England, now advocated in Parliament that a similar privilege be granted to the Jews.

"Observations upon this subject would be more powerful if a Member of this House belonging to the creed of the accused were able to make them. The Government ought to introduce a Bill for the complete emancipation of the Jews."

Thus spake England by the mouths of its worthiest representatives.

Next day (23rd July) a numerous assembly of the most distinguished Jews in London was held in the Great Synagogue to make the final arrangements for sending Montefiore to Egypt. It was then proved what a noble circle of Jews England harboured, and that their minds were filled by lofty sentiments of attachment to Judaism and its adherents. Hitherto the English Jews had taken but little part in Jewish history, they had remained passive owing to their insignificant numbers. But when for the first time they asserted themselves they displayed their independence, and gave a brilliant example to others. Montefiore, de Castro, Rothschild, Van Oven, Salomons, and many others, spoke and acted like Jews conscious of their own power, who were ready to make the greatest sacrifices in order to secure the triumph of their impugned belief. Cremieux also came over from Paris and was present. The meeting first acknow-



ledged its gratitude to those men, Christians as well as Jews, who had zealously defended the unhappy people of Damascus, viz., James de Rothschild, who had largely contributed towards the support of the impoverished Jews in Damascus, Metternich and his agents, Laurin and Merlato, and also Hodges, the English Consul. Bernard van Oven delivered a glowing yet appropriate speech, which was received with much applause.

Many words were not required at this meeting. All were firmly resolved to make every effort and every sacrifice in order to obtain satisfaction for those who were falsely accused of shedding blood. The scene of this important Jewish assembly in London was somewhat similar to that held in Alexandria exactly eighteen centuries before, when Judaism, in the time of the Emperor Caligula, was branded with disgrace by shameless, diabolical enemies. At that time, also, the most prominent Jews, famed for their culture, nobility of mind, and wealth, gathered together. But the Alexandrine assembly, surrounded by foes, had been filled with terror and fear, whilst the one in London was encouraged and supported by the good wishes and sympathy of the citizens of the capital. In the second Jewish congregation, that of Manchester, similar meetings were held.

Assured of success, Montefiore set out on his important journey, provided with letters of recommendation from the leaders of the State, and accompanied by the good wishes of millions of persons, foremost among whom was Queen Victoria. On his departure she gave him audience, and placed at his disposal a State-boat in which to cross the Channel—certainly an extraordinary mark of favour and sympathy for the misfortunes of the Jews, but at the time the feeling in their favour was so strong, that even this did not create great surprise. Montefiore was accompanied by a gentleman of the

legal profession and by his wife Judith, who insisted upon sharing her husband's hardships on this expedition in the cause of her nation. She was the ideal of a Jewish lady, cultured, noble-minded, proud of her belief and devotedly attached to her race, a brilliant contrast to the women of Berlin, who had brought disgrace upon Judaism. Before Montefiore and his escort left England, the two Chief Rabbis of the German and Portuguese communities, Solomon Herschel (died 1842), and David Meldola, deemed it necessary to repeat the solemn oath, which Manasseh Ben Israel and Moses Mendelssohn had taken; that the Blood Accusation against the Jews had not a shadow of support in Talmudical writings, and still less was there any truth in the assertion that the crime had ever been committed. In regard to the reckless clerical French party and the venal German newspapers, this oath was by no means superfluous. Catholic agitators in France and Belgium reviled the Jews, if for no tangible, yet for a comprehensible reason, and with a definite plan of entrapping the consciences of the liberal-minded again in their nets. But there were some German writers who acted in this way for baser reasons, and in order to utilise the misfortunes of others as a source of wealth. A certain Dr. Philibert had sent a letter to the house of Rothschild in Paris, stating that for a large sum of money he would undertake the defence of the Damascus Jews in every European journal, adding the threat that if this blood-money were refused he would influence public opinion in the opposite direction. This miserable offer was rejected by the Jews with scorn. They felt that they could rely upon their own strength and the power of truth. Foiled in his expectations, the contemptible scribbler attacked the Jews, and increased the number of lies and slanders which had already accumulated around the Damascus murder. The Chief Rabbis had therefore to swallow their pride, and to take

an oath on a matter which was as clear as daylight.

Meanwhile if the Jews were attacked in the French and German newspapers, England afforded them sufficient cause to forget all the sufferings of the Jews throughout fifteen centuries. Distinguished merchants, proprietors of large banking-houses and Members of Parliament, about two hundred and ten in all, preferred a request to the Lord Mayor of London, Marshall, to call a public meeting and enable them to express their feelings and their real attitude towards the persecution of the Jews in Damascus. The Lord Mayor, being of their opinion in the matter, cordially assented, and a brilliant meeting was held in London (in the Mansion House, 3rd July) which was in itself a victory. Many ladies of rank were among the audience. The Chairman, Thompson, remarked at the very outset :

“That the Jews of Damascus in their conduct were as worthy of respect as those who dwell among us in England. And may I be permitted by those gentlemen to say that none of our fellow-citizens are more zealous in the spread of humanity, in aiding the poor and oppressed, in protecting the orphan and in promoting literature and knowledge than they are, and that their benevolence is not only extended to the people who belong to their own religion, but also to Christians, equally with members of every creed.”

A Member of Parliament named Smith, who rose to move the first resolution, said :

“I consider these charges as false as the natures of the men who invented them are cruel and evil. I am certain that the whole country with one voice, and one accord, will rise to suppress such atrocities, such barbarities, as have been carried on in Damascus. And what people is it that has been subjected to such pain? A nation that is connected with us by everything that religion holds dear and sacred ; a nation whose faith is based upon history, that awaits with unfaltering confidence its political and religious restoration in the future ; a nation that is closely bound up with the progress of trade and civilisation throughout the whole world, and that is in friendly intercourse with the whole world. . . . In past times they were the men who led the way in educating the human race, and granted to others that very civil and religious freedom which at the present time they demand for themselves. This nation has given the best proof of the value it sets upon freedom, seeing that by its own example it has shown how



greatly it was actuated by this principle in its conduct towards others without distinction of creed : it therefore has a claim to the highest tolerance."

A prominent clergyman, Lord Howdon, added :

"We often find in the most secret ways of Providence that good arises from evil and therefore I, together with all the friends of mankind, hope that the Parliament of this country, expressing its opinion of this cruelty, will offer a recompense to the Jews for their sufferings by allowing them to become legislators."

The motion was carried unanimously :

"That this meeting deeply deplores the fact that in this enlightened age a persecution of our Jewish brethren could possibly be set on foot by ignorance and inflamed by bigotry."

Towards the end of the meeting O'Connell entered. He thought his presence would be required to arouse enthusiasm. But when he saw that the zeal on behalf of the Jews had been raised to a high pitch, he merely added :

"After the testimony that has been given to demonstrate the moral worth of the Jews, could any man be so insane as to believe that they used blood for their rites? Is not a Jew an example of life in every way? Is he not a good father, a good son? Are they not true friends? Are they not honest, industrious? I appeal to all Englishmen to raise their voices in defence of the victims of every shameful oppression. The appeal may go from one end of the British Isles to the other, and if there is still wanting the concurrence of an Irishman, here am I to testify to it."

This three hours' meeting in the Mansion House forms a noteworthy episode in Jewish history. In the name of the meeting, the Lord Mayor communicated the resolutions which were passed, not only to the English Government, but also to the Ambassadors of all European Powers, requesting them at the same time to obtain expressions of sympathy with the Jews from their respective nations and rulers. So effective was the result of unbiassed public opinion, that the Emperor of Russia, Nicholas, as well as the American Republic, felt themselves morally compelled to express their abhorrence at the tortures which had been inflicted on the Jews.

A few weeks later a similar meeting was held in Manchester, and here also, although most of the speakers were clergymen, the same sentiments with regard to the Jews were pronounced. Why had not such views predominated in the fourth and fifth centuries, when Christianity first became paramount? What tears and bloodshed would have been avoided! But the Jewish race was to be tested and strengthened by its martyrdom.

Montefiore was enabled to begin his journey filled with courage. He was not only supported by the Government, but was accompanied by the sympathies of the best men in England, and therefore he felt hope. But for Cremieux the matter was not so easy. He was prevented from taking active measures by the French Ministry. Thiers wished to show himself firm. Perhaps he was not so much to blame as was generally supposed; it is possible that Louis Philippe, who was very cunning, hindered him from yielding. Although reminded in the Chamber of Peers (July 10th) by honourable men, that by his defence of Ratti Menton, he was compromising the honour of France, he nevertheless continued his ambiguous attitude. But events brought the cunning of Thiers and the king to nought. Whilst they thought that by their petty intrigues, obstinacy, and by deceiving Mehmet Ali they were strengthening the position of France, the four remaining European Powers—England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia—formed a compact against France, the Quadruple Alliance (July 15th), in which it was agreed that Syria should be restored to the Sultan. The downfall of Thiers was already imminent, while he boasted of his successes.

A day before the conclusion of the Alliance, Montefiore and Cremieux, with their respective escorts, set out for Egypt. In Cremieux's company was Solomon Munk, who worthily and amply represented Jewish learning. Thus the Jewish embassy

was not lacking in what is requisite for the success of a great enterprise—devotion, pure trust in God, eloquence, and deep scholarship. In their journey through France these noble-minded and gallant representatives of Judaism were received with enthusiasm in the Jewish communities, in Avignon, Nismes, Carpentras, and Marseilles, and were followed by good wishes. In Leghorn, where the Royal ship anchored, the Portuguese community celebrated the day of their landing as a holiday. Every distinction among the Jews disappeared in the unanimous admiration for men who had undertaken so difficult a task, and in the hope that they would succeed in their attempt. All Israel was once more of one heart and soul. Orthodox Rabbis allowed prayers for Montefiore and Cremieux to be interpolated in the Divine Service. Every Jew, even the most humble, was ready to bring some sacrifice in order to lighten the task.

On arriving at Cairo (4th August), they hastened on their mission, without taking any rest. Montefiore, strongly supported by the English Consul-General Hodges, who had received instructions from Palmerston to that effect, at once solicited an interview with Mehmet Ali (6th August), by whom he was received, and to whom he handed a petition in the name of the Jewish community requesting permission to go to Damascus, and there conduct an inquiry into the circumstances of the case. For this purpose a safe-conduct was required for himself and his friends, and also the privilege of speaking to the prisoners as often as was necessary and of hearing evidence. Mehmet Ali was sorely perplexed. He would willingly have acceded to this request, it being necessary that he should pose as a just Prince before the eyes of Europe. But the French Consul-General Cochelet—instructed by Thiers—checked this inclination, and offered every opposition to prevent the veil from



being lifted. Cochelet, contrary to custom, would not even introduce Cremieux to the Pasha. Cremieux was therefore obliged to seek an audience for himself; but, as had been the case with Montefiore, received only evasive answers. The Eastern Question had at that time become extremely perplexing. Every moment Mehmet Ali was expecting the final decision of the European Powers that he should submit to the Sultan, and surrender the independence he had acquired, and also Syria. At the same time he did not wish to break with those Powers which took up the cause of the Jews, more especially with England and Austria, nor with Thiers, nor Louis Philippe, who dared not forsake Ratti Menton and the monks. Owing to Mehmet Ali's indecision, matters dragged on for three weeks. The Jewish Envoys received no definite reply. They were not discouraged, but sought to devise new means by which to attain their aim. Cremieux hit upon the best plan. All the European Consuls, or as many as were willing to sign a petition, should demand the liberation of the prisoners in Damascus. Nine Consuls agreed to this, in fact all, except the French Consul. Mehmet Ali, however, obtained information of the proposed petition, and in order that it should not appear that he had yielded to the pressure of foreign Powers, through their representatives, he determined to despatch an order to Damascus, and on his own account (28th August) ordered that the prisoners should forthwith be set at liberty.

The two Envoys and their escort were now filled with heartfelt joy. The three synagogues in Alexandria resounded with prayers of thanksgivings and blessings for Mehmet Ali, Metternich and the Austrian Consuls Laurin and Merlato, and all who had taken part in the deliverance, and who were delighted at the result of their efforts.

Great was the astonishment however of the two Jewish representatives when a Turkish copy of

Mehmet Ali's order reached them, and Munk, who was a skilled linguist, read out the words, "Mr. Moses Montefiore and Cremieux have besought me to bestow mercy upon the Jews in Damascus and to grant them liberty." Thus it was implied that the accused Damascus Jews, though guilty, had been treated by the Pasha with mercy, instead of justice. The hand of Cochelet was visible in this attempt to shield Ratti Menton and the monkish executioners. Cremieux straightway hastened to the Pasha, explained to him how the expression "mercy" cast a slur upon the accused, and with them upon all Jews, because they were still assumed to be guilty. He asked that the words "liberty and peace" should be substituted instead. Mehmet Ali ordered this alteration to be made in the Firman, and thus the last intrigues of Cochelet were destroyed.

As soon as the order arrived at Damascus, Sherif Pasha, who knew Mehmet Ali's severity, was obliged at once to liberate the nine Jewish prisoners who were still detained in jail (6th September) without consulting Ratti Menton. Seven of the men had been mutilated by the tortures, only two having escaped who had suffered in this way. Four victims had died. No sooner did the joyful news of their liberation get abroad in Damascus, than all the Jews and many Turks assembled before the prison and accompanied the sufferers to the synagogue, in order to offer up thanks to God for their regained freedom, and to pray for Mehmet Ali and their Jewish protectors.

The joy of the Jews in all parts of the world, on hearing of the triumph of their just cause, may be imagined; it was a national rejoicing in which the best men, both in Europe and Asia, participated. All that remained to be effected was to obtain from Mehmet Ali the official statement that the Blood Accusation was a calumny, and of this there was ample proof when everyone in Damascus could

again speak freely about the sad occurrence. The Jewish Envoys also thought it opportune to request the Pasha to abolish torture altogether. But political complications prevented the accomplishment of this humane proposal. Mehmet Ali was obliged to surrender Syria as well as Crete to Turkey. Thus punishment overtook him, for it was out of deference to France that he had complacently witnessed the scenes of blood in Damascus, for nearly three months. Sherif Pasha, even before Damascus was captured by the Turks, was dragged in chains to Cairo and there executed, presumably for treason. François Salins, one of the malicious French persecutors of the Jews in Damascus, was torn to pieces by the mob. The fanatical Catholics of this city, who, under Mehmet Ali had permitted so much cruelty, were humiliated, or felt themselves humiliated, when Raphael Farchi, the distinguished Jew, was again installed in his position as President of the City Council. No longer able to torture the Jews, they cooled their hatred by inciting to a crusade against them. The representative of the Greek Patriarch, and Vicar of the Holy Land, Vantabiet, the Armenian Bishop, Jacob, the Syrian priest and representative of the Catholic Patriarch, the priest Maruni—in short, the representatives of three sects who bore a deadly hatred against each other, united in fastening a new calumny on the Jews, who were hated equally by all three.

“The Jews of Damascus had allowed themselves grossly to insult the Christians, to abuse them and subject them to all sorts of indignities. Several persons had made complaints of the disgraceful behaviour of the Jews, which was abominable and which humiliated all Christians.”

In the meantime, the majority of European Christendom were sufficiently well acquainted with the veracity of the clergy of Damascus to pay no attention to this hypocritical lament. The heads



of Catholicism also felt bitterly ashamed of having taken any part in the Damascus affair.

The Jewish Envoys did not think their task completed, unless, as far as lay in their power, they could prevent the repetition of events which had branded all Judaism with seeming dishonour. Seeing that Syria, together with Damascus, had been restored to Turkey, Montefiore made his way to Constantinople, entered into communications with the Porte, where he was well received, and together with some distinguished Jews of the Turkish capital obtained an audience of the Sultan, when he asked for a Firman (6th November), which should, in future, secure the Turkish Jews from blood accusations.

Cremieux chose another field for his activity. The martyrdom of the Damascus Jews had the unexpected effect of strengthening that connection between the Jews in Europe and those in the East which had been loosened. The latter saw with astonishment how much their European brethren could accomplish by means of their culture, influence and courage, and that they were treated with distinction by Princes and great men, whilst they themselves bent their backs, unresistingly, to every blow. This reverent admiration of the Asiatic Jews for those of Europe, Cremieux utilised by attempting to emancipate the Egyptian Jews (or at least those in the two capitals of Alexandria and Cairo) from their state of ignorance, and render them susceptible to civilisation. Their ignorance even of Jewish writings, consequent upon the immeasurable oppression under which they had laboured, as well as their indescribable poverty, contributed to keep alive the intense contempt in which they were held by Mahometans and Christians. From this ignominy Cremieux hoped to free them, and he was powerfully supported by Solomon Munk, who, as already noticed, appears to have been the intermediary

between the European and the Egyptian Jews—between the past and the present. Munk addressed an eloquent Hebrew and Arabic circular letter (23rd Elul) to the Jews of Egypt, in which he contrasted the former splendour of the Jews of that country in the time of the Second Temple, in the time of Philo and Maimuni, when they stood at the head of Jewish spiritual activity, with the darkness of their present misery, in consequence of their intellectual decay. He exhorted them to wake from their death-like torpor and to establish schools, where their children could obtain a knowledge of Judaism and of Jewish literature, and at the same time obtain a practical education. Munk effected for the Egyptian Jews what Wessely had done for those of Europe. But, unlike his predecessor, he was not denounced as a heretic for his efforts. On the contrary, the Rabbis of Alexandria were the first to offer their assistance in the work. A distinguished Jew, named Valensius, placed himself at the head of a society, founded for the purpose of establishing schools and of supervising public education. Then Cremieux, together with Munk, repaired to Cairo, where there dwelt a large congregation of about 300 families, only about twelve of whom were very wealthy, while about 200 lived on charity. Here also the Rabbi, Moses Joseph Algazi, an aged man of seventy-six, and a prominent man named Adda, readily assisted in founding schools. Owing to their exertions and those of other persons, two schools for boys were opened in Cairo (4th October), and one for girls; these were called the Cremieux schools. Here, Munk succeeded in bringing about an important reconciliation. He strenuously opposed the zeal of the rigidly orthodox, and declared that the children of Karaites were also admissible to the schools, there being about a hundred persons of this sect in Cairo. The Rabbi Algazi also supported the innovation, which seemed to be a step towards renewing the

brotherhood between Rabbinites and Karaites. Stirred by these movements, the Grand Rabbi of Constantinople (Chacham Bashi), Moses Fresco, issued a circular letter (28th October) to the Turkish congregations, urging that it was the duty of the Jews to learn the language of the country (Turkish), in order to meet the Sultan's wishes, who, by his Firman Hatti-Sherif, had raised them from their abject state. The mixed language in which this circular letter of the Chacham Bashi was written (Old Spanish, mingled with Hebrew and Turkish words), proved sufficiently the necessity that the Jews should use a pure language.

Meanwhile these beginnings were merely seeds scattered in the desert sand, and it was doubtful whether they would take root and grow. The results were only developed on a larger scale twenty years later, under the name of "the Universal Alliance of Israelites" (Alliance Israélite Universelle). The mission to Egypt produced practical and lasting fruit for Jewish science, chiefly through Solomon Munk (born at Glogau, 1802; died at Paris, 1867). It is doubtful whether the spotless character of this man, or his devoted attachment to science, is to be more admired. He added to the number of great men produced among the Jews during the first half of the nineteenth century. His modesty was a marked feature, which grew in proportion to the increase of his scientific importance. For his patience in misfortune, and cheerfulness in the sufferings which he had brought upon himself by his labours for science, he was greatly admired in his native country, Germany, and in France, his adopted Fatherland, and he was loved as much as he was revered. Munk possessed all the virtues of the Jews without their faults. In the comprehensive range of Arabic literature he was one of the first masters of the day, and the most profound scholars in the same study granted to him



equal distinction, or awarded to him the palm. As interpreter to the escort of Cremieux, he spoke and wrote in Arabic like one born in an Arab tent. He understood the words and sense of any message by a kind of instinct which only increased in keenness when he lost his sight from poring over numerous manuscripts. His intellectual sight compensated for the loss of his physical power. The darkness which enshrouded him for nearly twenty years before his death did not prevent his vision from being clear and distinct.

The glory of Jewish history during the Middle Ages developed during the rule of the Arabs in the East and West; its dawn began with Saadiah, and it reached its zenith with Maimuni. Munk banished the obscurity in which this epoch had been enwrapped, and illumined it with the full light of his profound studies. The innermost thoughts of Maimuni, the awakener of intellects, to whom, next to the renaissance in modern days, the Jewish race is chiefly indebted, were first completely revealed through the researches of Munk. He renewed in its original form what had been spoilt by continual emendations. The proud boast of Christendom that even in the obscurity of the Middle Ages it had disseminated the bright germs of thought, Munk controverted by incontestable proofs that without Arabic and Jewish philosophy, the darkness of the Middle Ages would have been impenetrable, and that the so-called Christian schools of philosophy of that period were fed upon the crumbs, which fell from the lips of Jewish thinkers. Munk so conclusively established this historical fact that it is scarcely possible to speak of a Christian philosophy. Another historical fact concerning the origin and development of the Karaite sect, which, notwithstanding the powerful influence they exercised upon thought in the Jewish Middle Ages, was only known in rough outlines, was also brought

to light by Munk; in a word, Jewish science is deeply indebted to him. He not only greatly added to it by his profound knowledge, but he also showed the way how to pursue a sound course of investigation. Just as Luzzatto opened up new Hebrew sources for Jewish science, so Munk discovered new Arabic sources, rendering them comprehensible and accessible, and thereby greatly adding to the knowledge of Judaism, which he loved with all his heart. Munk's sojourn in Alexandria and Cairo was of extraordinary value to his literary and historical researches. From that soil, which had lain unproductive as to intellectual results for many a day, he excavated rich treasures for Jewish science. Munk fully recognised that the self-respect of the Jews would only be confirmed by the recognition of the work which they had performed in the paths of science.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

EVENTS PRECEDING THE REVOLUTIONS OF FEBRUARY AND MARCH,  
1848, AND SUBSEQUENT SOCIAL ADVANCE OF THE JEWS.

Return of Montefiore and Cremieux from the East—Patriotic Suggestions—General Indecision—Gabriel Riesser—Michael Creizenach—Reform Party in Frankfort—Rabbinical Assembly—Holdheim—Reform Association—Zachariah Frankel—The Berlin Reform Temple—Michael Sachs—His Character—His Biblical Exegesis—Holdheim and Sachs—The Jewish German Church—Progress of Jewish Literature—Ewald and his Works—Enfranchisement of English Jews—The Breslau Jewish College—Its Founders—The Mortara Case—Pope Pius IX.—The Alliance Israélite—Astruc, Cohn, Caballo, Masuel, Netter—The American Jews—The “Union of American-Hebrew Congregations”—The Anglo-Jewish Association—Benisch, Löwy—The “Israelitische Allianz”—Wertheimer, Goldschmidt, Kuranda—Rapid Social Advance of the Jews—Rise of Anti-Semitism.

1840—1870.

THE return from the East of the Jewish Envoys who not only had saved a few men from death, but had rescued all Judaism from disgrace, was a continuous triumphal procession. From Corfu to Paris and London, and even to the depths of Poland, the Jewish communities were unanimous in expressions of thanksgiving to the rescuers, endeavouring by visible signs to evince their gratitude, and at the same time to show their patriotic sentiments for Judaism. The tributes took the form of public orations, addresses, articles written in every European language, naturally also in Hebrew, and both in prose and verse. Attentions and gifts were freely bestowed upon the two chief representatives of Judaism (who had played so distinguished a part), in order to celebrate in a worthy fashion the momentous events which had occurred in Damascus, and transmit the remembrance of these deeds to posterity. Cremieux, who was the first to set out on



his return journey, received enthusiastic homage in Corfu, Trieste, Venice, Vienna, Fürth, Nuremberg, Frankfort, and Mayence (November—December, 1840). The large communities through whose cities he could not pass sent deputations and addresses to him. It was naïvely touching that the old-fashioned orthodox Rabbis, at a loss how to show their gratitude, bestowed upon him the title of Rabbi (Morenu), as the highest honour which it was in their power to offer. Only the Jewish community in Paris behaved in a cool fashion, and did not prepare any fitting reception for their emissary, as if fearing to wound the sensitiveness of King Louis Philippe, whose ambiguous attitude had been clearly evinced.

Montefiore, who had remained longer in Constantinople, in order to obtain a favourable Firman, and who began his return journey later, and travelled mostly by sea, did not come into contact with as many congregations as Cremieux, and hence did not receive so much public homage. He was, however, overwhelmed with letters from all sides. By his watchful care, which was continually directed to the welfare and honour of his brethren, and without any idea of reward, he had put their enemies to shame by his simplicity. He obtained a promise from Cardinal Rivarola, the protector of all Capuchins in Rome, that the tombstone should be removed, which had been erected in the Capuchin Church at Damascus recording the murder of Father Tomaso by the Jews, and which represented him as a martyr. He also induced King Louis Philippe to make the best of what had occurred. At an audience obtained for him through the English Ambassador, Lord Granville (February 22, 1844), Montefiore handed to the king a copy of the Firman of the Sultan, which testified the innocence of the Jews of Damascus, and which tacitly condemned the French Consul. Louis Philippe was compelled to swallow

this humiliation, and assume a gracious manner for the sake of appearances, and to congratulate Montefiore on his journey, and the success of his mission. Queen Victoria thanked Montefiore the more sincerely, through Lord Palmerston (who was Prime Minister at the time, and to whom he was presented on his return), for the succour which he had brought to his co-religionists.

The entire body of Jews in Europe were at this time engaged in carrying out three objects, that of offering to their two rescuers an enduring and striking token of gratitude, of perpetuating the memory of the deliverance effected by them, and finally, through combined action, of discovering a means whereby to prevent the recurrence of similar false accusations against Jews and Judaism. The leaders of the German Jews felt themselves especially moved to put on record their sympathy in the action taken, and to express their admiration for the two noble representatives of their race. The very party which had hitherto taken the lead in advocating progress had performed but little in connection with the sanguinary events of Damascus. A prominent Jewish scholar, Zunz, had completely refuted the alleged proofs, supposed to be drawn from the Talmud, of the use of blood by the Jews. The Jewish newspapers had boldly fought against anti-Jewish attacks and slanders. But this was all that had been attempted in Germany towards vindicating the honour of Judaism. Riesser could easily have joined Montefiore and Cremieux, could have accompanied them to Egypt as the representative of the German Jews, and have used his eloquence on behalf of the sufferers; but no such idea was even suggested. Geiger, from hatred to the Talmud, had indeed confessed to the anti-Semites that the Talmud contained misanthropical expressions. Certain kindly-disposed Jews in Germany therefore felt it the

more necessary to take public action in the matter. Riesser, together with a few friends, desired to found societies, by means of which the Jews of the four chief countries of Europe should offer some public recognition to their two representatives. But this plan of acknowledging their indebtedness fell through. In fact, the three objects desired by the promoters were only imperfectly carried out, because the right means to attain them were not pursued. The services of Montefiore were, however, acknowledged with fervent enthusiasm on his return by a public celebration in the synagogues in London, and a piece of plate was presented to him in remembrance of his success. A still greater distinction awaited him at the hands of Queen Victoria. She rewarded him with a knighthood (24th June), which was a great honour both to his family and himself. Yet more important than this recognition of great merit, were the words of Her Majesty that accompanied the gracious mark of distinction :

“After it was brought to our notice that our trusty and well-beloved Sir Moses Montefiore, in consequence of tidings from the East, which stated that Jews in Damascus and Rhodes had been imprisoned and martyred, and several children thrown into prison and deprived almost of all nourishment, and that many persons had been so cruelly tortured, that death ensued, on account of the accusation that the Jews had murdered the Father Tomaso . . . . and that he, quite voluntarily, accompanied by Lady Montefiore, had journeyed to Alexandria with the view of proving the falsehood of the charge and of representing the affairs of his unhappy and persecuted brethren ; that he succeeded in obtaining from the Pasha, Mehemet Ali, the honourable liberation of the accused who were incarcerated, and the permission for those who had fled the city to return home ; that for this purpose he procured a Firman in Constantinople from his Imperial Majesty the Sultan Abdul Medshid, which declared the innocence of the Jews, and assured equal rights with all other subjects, to members of the Jewish religion under Turkish rule—we have therefore taken the above-mentioned facts into our royal consideration, and desire to give to Montefiore a special mark of our royal favour, in memory of his persevering efforts on behalf of his suffering and persecuted brethren in the East, and of his nation in general.”

This is a portion of the history of modern Jews related by the Queen herself.



In comparison with this distinction, the proposal of certain French congregations of the Upper Rhine to strike a commemorative medal in honour of Cremieux appears very trivial. They also shared the general idea, "that it was important for future generations to perpetuate the memory of the events in the history of the Israelites of the year 1840," but Cremieux declined the medal. In what manner these joyful and national memories should be immortalised was a matter concerning which there was general indecision. Cremieux asked the French Jews and others to support the schools that he had established in Alexandria and Cairo by their contributions. Only a small amount, however, was subscribed: the maintenance of the Cremieux schools in Egypt was not closely connected with the main question, and was not likely to make a lasting impression on the sympathy of the Jews. One solitary proposition, which might have proved useful, was at this time put forward, but no notice was taken of it.

"It is not by ostentatious gifts, but by a public festival, that we can best testify our gratitude. With the intention of proclaiming this great incident as a truly religious episode, let us unite it to our annual celebrations, and we should thus offer the finest memorial to the brave men who went to the rescue. The day should be considered equal to the festivals of Chanuka and Purim; for on those days it may be said that Israel was delivered from bodily suffering, whilst on this day it was delivered from spiritual servitude."

Judaism of old knew no more effectual means to commemorate its liberation and victories, and to arouse a spirit of emulation in posterity than to establish a day of memorial, by which means, time the destroyer, became the protector of its historical events. If the most skilful master of the Hebrew language, Isaac Erter, had completed the narrative of the persecution in Damascus and its deliverance, which he commenced in the pure Biblical style, and if the heads of the Jewish communities had resolved to commemorate the most important day, during

the affair at Damascus, and to read the "Scroll" (Megillah) in public, a lasting remembrance of these occurrences would have been preserved, and at the same time a means would have been found to cement afresh the bonds of fellowship. The Jews of Asia and Africa, and throughout the globe would joyfully have accepted such a festival, as an international memorial. Munk, whose voice carried great weight, remarked :

" Might the sad Damascus incident at least serve to make us take cognizance of our disorganised condition, which, though mournful to contemplate, is unfortunately a fact. Might it not show us that we have wasted our energies in dangerous pursuits, and again strengthen the bond that formerly united us."

Instead of unity, however, a rupture took place within German Judaism, which was caused by a trifling dispute, and might easily have been settled in the commencement, but which afterwards grew to great proportions. A feeling of opposition was rife, and by chance it broke out on this occasion ; but it might equally well have shown itself at any other time, as long as it was not crushed, or worn out. The Hamburg Temple, which twenty years before, had first stirred up dissensions between the old-fashioned orthodox party and the reformers, now brought about a quarrel that henceforth assumed a fiercer complexion. The congregation of the Temple had largely increased in numbers since its foundation. The younger members of the old-fashioned community had joined, because in the old synagogue they found no satisfaction for their devotional requirements, and they objected to the continual disorder that prevailed. The new congregation had already grown to nearly eight hundred members, and included a man who in his own person exerted great powers of attraction. After the death of Breselau, the secretary of the congregation, Gabriel Riesser had accepted that post. He became closely connected with the Temple and was elected to the

office of second Warden. As his name was in extraordinary repute, owing to his untiring zeal for the political and social emancipation of the Jews in Germany, his adhesion to the Temple shed new lustre upon it. When the members of the Temple determined to erect a new and larger house of prayer, the old party by complaining to the Senate threw obstacles in the way of the undertaking. The authorities of the Temple had also caused a new prayer-book to be compiled.

The altered liturgy of the Temple was published and announced as a general "Prayer-Book for Israelites," but was sufficiently objectionable to the orthodox party to be utterly rejected. The circumstance that the new prayer-book, however, claimed to be used by all Jews gave rise to great annoyance. Chacham Bernays therefore renewed on Sabbath, in the three synagoges (1st Marcheshvan, 16th October, 1841), the proclamations against heretics which the united Rabbis had issued on the foundation of the Temple, and which forbade any Israelite to use this prayer-book. In the reasons assigned, harsh expressions were employed showing that this prayer-book, even more than the former one, bore the character of a wanton and frivolous treatment of religious convictions, as contained in the Hebrew prayers. This denunciation naturally excited the Temple congregants, and even transported the cautious Riesser to inordinate lengths. Whilst preachers regarded the insulting expression of opinion from a religious standpoint, Riesser saw in it an encroachment upon their rights, "because the Chacham had no authority over the Temple." The committee of the Temple then published a counter-declaration (24th October), in which Bernays was charged not alone with "arrogance, impotent partiality, and malicious ignoring of the contents of the book," but with "ignorance of all theological and liturgical knowledge." There now



arose a violent dispute, which was conducted on both sides with such passion, that the Senate was compelled to interfere and reprove both parties. The Chacham and the leaders of his congregation who sided with him, circulated thousands of copies of the sentence of condemnation upon the prayer-book amongst the various communities; whilst the authorities of the Temple (November) requested conscientious Rabbis and preachers to give their unprejudiced opinions as to the value or worthlessness of the innovations, expecting that the decisions would be in their favour. On this occasion the changes which had taken place in the German communities two decades before became evident. Whereas formerly only three Rabbis had ambiguously given their assent to the ritual of the Temple, and many others had condemned it, at this second discussion only the Rabbi of Altona supported Bernays, whilst twelve or thirteen others pronounced a judgment adverse to him; this was at the close of 1841 or beginning of 1842. Then began the opening years of reform. Young Rabbis or clergymen, ministers of the soul (as they preferred to be called), who had mostly drawn their wisdom from academical schools, and were enthusiastic for the progress which had become the fashion, now led the way. The old Rabbis, on the other hand, no longer ventured to oppose them. Thus it seemed as if all the Jews of Germany were in favour of innovations in the synagogue, and only a few who were wanting in spirit still struggled against this tendency.

The contest concerning the Hamburg Temple, in as far as it related to the city itself, bore no results, as a terrible conflagration (May, 1842) transformed a great part of the town into a mass of ruins, and distracted attention from party interests. The flame of reform, however, blazed up from another point, and threatened to spread far

and wide. In Frankfort-on-the-Maine, for some time past, there had been discontented persons who had broken away from the Judaism of the day. These disturbing elements partly originated in a school called the Philanthropia (which from small beginnings had grown into an important institution), and partly in the first Jewish Freemasons' lodge. The managers and teachers of the school and the members of the lodge, favoured a free mode of thought repugnant to Judaism. For a long time Michael Creizenach (born 1789, died 1842), a teacher at the Philanthropia, formed the centre of an invisible society. Creizenach, who was of an honest, judicious, but uninteresting nature, had published many pamphlets combating Rabbinical Talmudical Judaism, but owing to their temperate tone and want of depth, these writings made little impression. He, however, filled the circle of his friends and admirers with a passion for innovation and a deep aversion to antiquity.

After his death several of his adherents endeavoured to form a special community, and to establish a sect, even at the risk of separating from Judaism. Their aim was in some measure to remove the objections of anti-Jewish politicians, who withheld equal rights from the Jews, on the score of their attachment to their nationality, to the Talmud and to old forms, and they also desired to secure freedom of action for themselves. They were educated laymen who, owing to the prevailing confusion, had lost their mental guiding-strings, or they may have been misled by false leaders. They constituted themselves into a Society of the Friends of Reform (October, 1842), and drew up a confession of faith, which clearly proved the perplexity of the times. They refused to recognise the Talmud as an authority. But as to the Bible? "They considered the Mosaic religion capable of continual development." They further wished entirely to disregard the

dietary laws, because they "had originated in the ancient constitution of the State," and at the present day had lost their significance as a religious act or symbol. They definitely denied all hope in the Messiah, or a return to Palestine, "because they regarded their native land as their sole fatherland."

The Creizenian Friends of Reform did not find many supporters. They therefore turned to Gabriel Riesser, whose importance had already been acknowledged, who by attracting others might increase their numbers, and who, as they thought, was inclined to assist them. He does not appear, however, to have overcome the excitement into which he had been thrown by Bernays' intervention in the affairs of the Hamburg Temple. He did not even shrink from a total secession, although he had hitherto constantly desired to have "the shell of Judaism also respected on account of its soul." The principles of freedom which occupied his mind destroyed all his attachment to existing Judaism. He therefore decided with regard to the question in the Creizenian or Frankfort programme, that it was optional for every Jewish father to have his sons circumcised, and that in case of the omission of this rite, civil disabilities should not be entailed. Riesser wished to combat any presumptive right of forcing conscience. Meanwhile, other men who had been asked to join, took umbrage at this question of circumcision. The founders of the society of reformers, therefore, saw themselves obliged to relinquish this point as well as the declaration against the dietary laws, and to adhere only to three out of the five resolutions of their original programme regarding the Talmud and the Messiah, and the possibility of the development of the "Mosaic religion." This abridgment and enfeebling of the original confession, however, Riesser considered to be illogical and cowardly, and withdrew his support. The power of attrac-



tion was now lacking in the society, and as only a few had joined, it perished at its birth. The question of circumcision was shortly afterwards again brought forward from another quarter. Certain unfortunate accidents at the circumcision of Jewish boys had induced the sanitary officers in Frankfort-on-the-Maine to issue an order (8th February, 1843) that contained the ambiguous wording, "Israelite citizens and inhabitants, as far as they desire to have their children circumcised, must employ the services of competent persons." From this it appeared that the Frankfort Senate left it optional to Jewish parents to perform the rite or neglect it, and did not regard it as a necessary mark of the Jewish religion. The Senate at the same time explained that they did not desire to pronounce themselves completely in accord with the innovators. But the reformers at once seized upon the words in order to have a pretext for abolishing the rite of circumcision. In consequence of this, Rabbi Solomon Trier collected the utterances of his brother Rabbis upon the subject (1843-44) in order to stamp out the question. This, however, caused but a slight sensation, seeing that even certain young Rabbis favourably disposed towards reform, had decisively asserted the obligation and necessity of circumcision. Thus no seceding sect was formed among the Jews of Germany, although the elements for it were there, and an uneasy state of feeling was the result.

This feeling was especially noticeable among the younger Rabbis, who were not very clear about the purpose and extent of the reforms to be instituted, or who met with continual opposition on one side or the other in their congregations, and who needed support in their isolation. At this time the fashion of assemblies and societies had come into vogue; railways had already been introduced, and, by uniting the great cities, had facilitated personal intercourse. Thus the demand for an assembly of

Rabbis met with approval. This meeting of Rabbis and ministers who were, to some extent, at one upon the subjects under discussion, at first awakened a certain interest; it was a novelty, and this always produces a certain amount of excitement. Meanwhile, on the first occasion only twenty-two Rabbis assembled in Brunswick, the majority coming from Southern and Western Germany. The remainder determined to wait until the resolutions of the assembly should be made known, and according as they either agreed or disagreed with these they would decide whether to join or to hold aloof. Only such Rabbis attended who still adhered to Judaism as founded on the Talmud; most of the members, however, had already partially, or wholly, severed themselves from the Talmud, although they did not practically manifest this severance in their religious practices.

The first Rabbinical Assembly was presided over by a man possessing all the qualities required to widen the breach, and bring about a complete separation. This was Samuel Holdheim (born at Kempen, 1806; died at Berlin, 1860). It is a curious yet natural fact that Talmudism, which had acquired its power and extensive range through Polish students, should be attacked by a Pole with unsparing severity. During his passage from boyhood to youth Holdheim displayed not only an extraordinary acquaintance with the Talmud and Rabbinical literature, but also such remarkable versatility in dialectics and the art of discussion that he astonished and won the admiration of grey-bearded Rabbis, and was considered as a highly-skilled Talmudist.

Like Solomon Maimon, Holdheim already had a son, when he took his seat in the public academy at Prague, after passing the intervening grades. All that he heard in the philosophical lecture-rooms in this not very distinguished Univer-

sity was new to him, astounded and dazzled him, and resulted in great perturbation of mind. He quickly assimilated such elements of knowledge as were connected with his previous acquirements, such as philosophy and Christian theology, studies which were tolerated in Austria, under Metternich. He had no liking for solid and intellectual branches of learning, and even the subjects which he took up he had first to reproduce in a Talmudical form. Holdheim's knowledge therefore was only of a fragmentary nature, and contained numerous gaps. He was, however, sufficiently careful and practical to devote himself to useful work, to acquire a good style, which he had formerly neglected, and he even obtained a reputation for pulpit eloquence. Owing to his poverty, he was compelled to work for his bread, and was thus unable to spend time upon his favourite subjects. The Bible, which had hitherto been a closed book to Holdheim, or had only been examined by him through Talmudical glasses, he employed solely in order to obtain verses for his sermons. It is not granted to everyone to possess ideals by which he can regulate his conduct. There must also exist dry, calm, unbelieving natures, only occupied with material thoughts, who build themselves huts here below, gaze contemptuously at all sublime and ideal sentiments, and regard them as mere enthusiasm and folly. Such Mephistophelian temperaments, the incarnation of the spirit of denial, are as necessary in the sphere of moral life as their opposites are in the sphere of natural existence. Holdheim had this tendency, and his Talmudical culture nourished and developed it. He knew of no enthusiasm either for the calm light of pale memories, or for the dim, cloudy dreams of the future. The firm ground of the present was more to his taste. Since Judaism, however, is based upon memories and hopes, Holdheim was not greatly attracted to it, but



sought to remodel and alter it, so that he might not be inconvenienced.

Mecklenburg-Schwerin, where the original forms of brutality as pursued in the Middle Ages had been preserved, and where mere caprice wielded the sceptre, was at this time ruled by a prince, who, instead of making his Jews free in action, wished them to be Freethinkers. They were to cast off all old memories and forms and re-model themselves anew. A superintendent was appointed for the re-adjustment of the congregations, and Holdheim was made Chief Rabbi (1840) to assist in reforms, and stamp innovations with the Rabbinical seal. He was at liberty to permit what he approved or to abolish whatever was distasteful to him. He formerly had had no conception that divine service must possess any dignity, but he now discovered that disorder in the synagogue was unseemly, and therefore determined to remove everything not countenanced by the spirit of the times. As, however, a desire for the changes in the synagogue did not originate from any impulse of his own, he looked around for patterns, and introduced the Würtemberg ritual, undisturbed by any consideration as to whether he was forcing the consciences of the majority of the old-fashioned orthodox congregations.

But Holdheim did not hope to win laurels by introducing innovations into the Synagogue. He had marked out for himself a wider field. He wished to alter the whole of Judaism in its threefold form, with its Biblical, Talmudical, and Rabbinical components, to confuse all ideas and stultify all conscience. Since Paul of Tarsus, Judaism had never known such an enemy in its midst, who shook the whole edifice to its very foundations. Holdheim possessed no original ideas which he could use as a lever for overthrowing Judaism: he had only a certain keenness of intellect

which he had gained from studying the Talmud. He was therefore obliged to make use of such thoughts of others as were public property. His acute intellect, however, helped him to find out disconnected premisses which suited his purpose, and to give them a colouring of truth. Judaism consists of an ethical combination of religious and moral ideas as well as of national and political elements. Holdheim accepted this definition in order to carry out the separation of religious from national ordinances, the latter having lost all significance since the downfall of the Jewish State. Which laws are national and enduring, and which are unstable? Holdheim gave a wide application to the term, calling all observances national and political which seem unpleasant, and require a certain amount of self-denial, such as keeping the Sabbath, the Jewish laws of marriage, and even the acquisition of the Hebrew language, which he desired to banish from the midst of the Jewish race because it is a national bond of union; and still more national is a hope in the Messiah. To these sophistries Holdheim added other quibbles. He saw that every State, however constituted, could as in Russian despotism, become an all-devouring Moloch which continually demands victims, and whose lust for sacrifices could only be satisfied by the abnegation of independence, freedom, and of every religious sentiment. The culminating point of Holdheim's theory was that Talmudical Judaism itself, in the expression "the law of the State is also the law for the Jews," applied to their civil relations, and ordained that every Jew should also follow and submit to the religious laws of the ruling State; Judaism, in fact, prescribes its own suicide as long as the State provides it with a silken halter. Had he lived in the time of the Maccabees, Holdheim would have joined the renegade Menelaus in urging the Jews to worship the Greek Zeus, because the State, which was then called Antiochus

Epiphanes, had so commanded. In the time of Hadrian, like a second Acher, he would have lauded the cult of Jupiter of the Capitol, and in the days of Philip of Spain and Emanuel of Portugal he would have advocated the worship of the cross. The millions of Jewish martyrs, according to his theory, were malefactors against the State, inasmuch as they had opposed the laws given to them. Holdheim, the son of the Talmud, struck down Talmudical Judaism with the weapons which it had bestowed upon him. The authority and power which the legislative Synhedrion had hitherto possessed, or ought to have possessed, Holdheim wished to see transferred to the Christian State, even the right of interfering with matters of conscience. These ideas he propounded with sophistic casuistry, unmistakably according to the method of the Polish Rabbinical school. It was difficult for Holdheim to decide what Judaism actually was, and what would be left of it, after everything apparently belonging to politics had been excluded, and when supreme authority was invested in each individual State, either to model, command, or prohibit religious practices.

The majority of the members of the first assemblage of Rabbis in Brunswick looked upon Holdheim with awe as a Talmudical scholar and a reckless reformer, and he obtained a distinct influence over the counsels and resolutions of the meeting. Less attention was paid to the letter and spirit of Judaism "than to the State, the Exalted German Government," and the incomprehensible and whimsical "spirit of the age." The Talmud was sacrificed by most of the delegates as a scapegoat, though the debates and conclusions of the Brunswick conference of Rabbis (June, 1844) produced but little effect. The congregations troubled themselves as little about it as they did about the protest from seventy-seven Rabbis of Germany,



Bohemia, Moravia and Hungary, which had been set on foot by an upright, self-sacrificing, disinterested but bigoted zealot. Hirsch Lehren of Amsterdam, and which attacked the assembly of Brunswick.

Events in the Christian world about this time demonstrated more effectually than this laboriously constructed protest, that Judaism with its ancient beliefs had not yet become superfluous. The exhibition of the pretended holy coat of Jesus in Trier, whither more than a million Catholics from all countries made a pilgrimage and bent the knee (August—October, 1844), showed that the "spirit of the age" was a deceptive notion. In consequence of this excess of mediæval superstition and credulity, there arose in Germany, as it first appeared, an intense anti-Catholic movement. A German Catholic Church was established (January, 1845), and next to it in the bosom of Protestantism "Communities of the Friends of Light" were formed, who threatened Christianity, its belief in the Trinity and the Divine Incarnation, with imminent dissolution. Every period has its delusions, and as soon as it is possible to imitate external surroundings there are Jews ready to make the attempt. Here and there voices were raised in favour of founding a German Jewish Church after the pattern of the German Catholic one. In Breslau the agitation for this new scheme was only artificially kept alive, but the movement was somewhat more energetic in Berlin. In this city a popular preacher, Stern, had been delivering lectures upon Judaism and Jewish history, and had represented Jewish doctrines as giving free scope for ill-natured attacks. Owing to his initiation, some twenty men, whose opinions upon these topics were in accord with his own, assembled for the purpose of establishing a sort of Church system of a peculiar type, called the Reform Association (2nd April, 1845). They be-

lieved that the majority of German Jews had already disowned all attachment to ancient Judaism in their hearts, and would gladly adopt a new creed. The founders of the Berlin Reform Association therefore issued a summons to all Israel to attend a Synod, in order to establish a new Jewish religion. In their programme they naturally only tabulated negative principles, such as the rejection of the Talmud and of the Messianic doctrine, because they belonged with body and soul to their homes in Berlin; they advocated a return to the dictates of Holy Writ, not according to its literal sense, but according to its spirit. The negative rules are given above. The affirmative ones were: "We desire belief, positive religion, and Judaism." The widespread confusion of ideas at this time was as great as when the Christian communities of old were first originated from semi-Jewish elements, and even clear heads became affected.

The matter did not, however, result in a Synod for the discussion of reform, which would indeed have marked the Jews as slavish imitators of the Church and of the "Friends of Light." The speeches in favour of the movement made in various quarters only proved to be full of hollow phrases. The Berlin Society still adhered to its programme, and as this found no favour in the eyes of the masses, it was to be ratified by the second Rabbinical Convention held in Frankfort (July, 1845), and recognised as the true form of Judaism.

This Assembly aroused greater excitement and fiercer passion than had been the case with the first, because, on the one hand, the Berlin Reform Union, by clinging to it, endeavoured to bring it to their own level or to effect its downfall, whilst on the other hand, a skilful leader of the orthodox party temporarily joined it. The orthodox party wished to show how Judaism could be purified, and was prepared to throw obstacles in the way, if the

Reformers should seem to rush into reckless extremes. The orthodox leader was Zachariah Frankel (born 1801, died 1875). He somewhat resembled Holdheim. Both were profoundly learned in the Talmud, and both first acquired general knowledge when advanced in years, but their points of dissimilarity were yet more striking. In Holdheim's character the prominent features were his innate or acquired love of scoffing at, and utter contempt for the past. In Frankel one is struck by the moral earnestness which, together with his warmheartedness, rendered him worthy of respect by his true regard for inherited forms, his conscientiousness in every matter, and his firm but somewhat peculiar character. Holdheim loved the present and the practical, Frankel the future and the ideal: the former strove to erase from men's memories all traces of the Talmud and Rabbinical Judaism, if not of Judaism altogether; whilst the latter justified and glorified the Talmud. The main aim of Frankel's scientific activity was to demonstrate that Talmudical tradition was correct, and that another Talmud had been known even before our Talmud. He sought traces of this original tradition in the ancient Greek translation of the Pentateuch, in the compositions of the two Judeo-Greek authors, Philo and Josephus, and especially in non-Talmudical sources. Such comprehensive studies were only possible in a man of his marvellous intellectual power and wonderful constitution.

Although Frankel laboured to maintain the glory of the Talmud and to prove that reverence was due to Jewish antiquity, he was not averse to religious reforms, nor was he blind to the necessities of modern times. However, although he would not recognise the claim of an individual to institute reforms, he was ready to appeal to a scientific tribunal and the voice of the people, as represented by the



whole Jewish world. He did not desire to revive obsolete forms into a semblance of life, even though they had formerly been of importance and was willing to abolish such existing customs as scientific inquiry had pronounced to be unjustified or hurtful. Frankel wished to see a conference of Rabbis, or, more correctly, of notables in the foremost rank of Jewish learning, so that the chasm between the old and the new systems could be bridged over. He therefore joined the Assembly of Rabbis at Frankfort, hoping to counteract the eager desire for reform by the weight of his name, which, owing to his distinguished position as a writer, was already famous, and to aid in guarding against imprudent measures, or at least in mitigating them. Like Holdheim and Geiger, who brought their programmes of reform with them, he also brought his, and in it he endeavoured to reconcile antiquity with progress.

Harassed on both sides by the contending influences of Frankel and the Reformers, the conference grew weaker and weaker. The first motion brought forward, which was not wholly unexpected, that the Hebrew language should, when possible, be eradicated from the minds and memories of the whole Jewish race, obliged Frankel to leave the meeting, and the applause that his conduct called forth revealed the fact that the Rabbinical Convention did not represent the entire body of the German Jews, but only a small and active party. Unconsciously the Frankfort Assembly had lost its balance. Its members were obliged to dissemble before the Reform Society. They had to praise its action, or they would have lost the support of the Reform party. On the other hand, they did not dare openly to associate themselves with its hollow views, or they would have lost favour with their congregations. They therefore had to find a way out of this perplexity, and determined to support the efforts of the Reform Association to the utmost, so long as

these "agreed with the principles by which they thought reform in Judaism ought to be guided," which sounded like a hidden reproach.

Meanwhile, the Reform Society paid no heed to this partial condemnation; they knew that those who took the lead in the conference, and especially Holdheim, sided with them, and they were impressed with the delusion that they were creating an essentially new form of Judaism. They formed themselves into a congregation of about two hundred members, and celebrated a consecration (2nd April, 1846), when Holdheim as high priest offered up clouds of incense. The congregation and their pastor were well fitted for each other, and even though they quarrelled at first, had nevertheless to embrace in friendship. Thus a German Jewish church was established with a temple, a preacher, and a ritual of its own. It seemed as if time had gone back some seventeen centuries, and they were in some town of Syria or Asia Minor or in Rome, when, out of the conflicts between ancient Judaism with semi-Christian and semi-pagan elements, new congregations had arisen, which only retained faint traces of Judaism. The new customs meanwhile prevailed in the Reform Temple in Berlin. The service was conducted with uncovered heads, which especially marked it as of foreign growth, and repulsed even some of those who otherwise approved of reform. Hebrew was retained only in a few prayers and in the readings from the Pentateuch. The Reform Temple, in fact, assumed a Germanic tinge, and threw off its Jewish cosmopolitan character. A scarcely noticeable trace of its Jewish origin was visible in the divine service, whilst in their mode of living the members could not be recognised as the descendants of Jews. Perhaps Holdheim was even more fanatically desirous of seeing every Jewish custom abolished than his free-thinking congregants. He

abrogated not alone Rabbinical Judaism and the Talmud, but he also discarded duties ordained by the Holy Scripture. But even in the Reform community it was evident that Jewish self-reliance had progressed greatly since the time of Friedländer. The Reform party had completely overcome their desire of becoming converted to Christianity. Of its constituents, who numbered one thousand souls, not one member nor any of their children joined the Christian Church. They did not desire to be considered altogether as a separate sect, but as a remnant still connected with the Jewish race.

The Berlin reformers, however, remained isolated, and found no following in Europe. Even in their own midst, a lukewarm spirit soon crept in, as their opponents had anticipated. From want of visitors to the house of prayer, the Sabbath worship had to be transferred to Sunday, the same change having been made by the Jewish Christians in the first century. The question of Sunday worship cannot be discussed here; it belongs to the immediate present. Such lukewarm energy evinced a great lack of interest, and as the founders themselves lived to witness it, they must have been convinced that they had been guilty of some mistake. To give an account of this blunder in its entirety cannot be attempted in this history; it would be overstepping the bounds of a record of events. One circumstance, however, must not be forgotten, that the Berlin Society of Reform had an antagonist in its vicinity. This enemy, of whom it had taken no account, was the more dangerous, as his incisive eloquence and whole attitude was a protest against the new sect founded by the Berlin Committee. This opponent was Michael Sachs, who was born at Glogau, 1808; died at Berlin at the beginning of 1864.

If bountiful nature had determined to create a thorough contrast to Holdheim, this contrast was



incorporated in Sachs. Externally, mentally, in appearance, speech, attitude, and tendency of mind, in his learning and character, even in habits and fancies—in everything the two men were so totally opposed, that at first sight they could hardly be recognised as sons of the same race, or as living under the same conditions. If Holdheim represented the Jewish Polish spirit, strung to the highest pitch by the Talmudical method of dialectics, Michael Sachs called to mind the Jewish emigrants from the Pyrenean peninsula, ennobled by classic forms and æsthetic teachings. He resembled the noble Isaac Cardozo, or Isaac de Pinedo, or any one of the numerous poets and scholars of Marrano lineage in Holland and Italy, who combined a deep devotion to Judaism with a taste for poetical or philological studies.

Owing to his peculiar nature, and the twofold influence exercised upon his mind by Hebrew and Greek literature, Sachs became an ideal personality, like Gebirol and Jehuda Halevi, who could only flourish upon the clear heights of existence, and who felt a physical disgust at everything of a mean character. There was no equivocation in him; feeling, thought, and action all flowed from one source. He was, therefore, mercilessly bitter against falsehood, ambiguity and hypocrisy, against all ostentation and pomposity, against noisy hollowness and vanity, which he scourged with the lash of his words and with his striking and brilliant wit. Noble-minded and resigned, even to self-sacrifice, humble before God and before man as bearing the impress of the Divine, Sachs was indignant against all who in religion, art, science, or public activity used counterfeit coin, and concealed their own self-seeking petty interests under the veil of a general and larger purpose. If, endowed with so many excellent qualities, Sachs throughout his life remained thoroughly Jewish in his convictions, yet in his deep

love of beauty he was Hellenic, thus in his own individuality contradicting the alleged impossibility of the existence of a dual nature, as had been asserted by Heine. Whatever was ugly, inharmonious or ungainly, was as repugnant to him as what was immoral and untrue.

Judaism was dearest to his heart, for he considered it to be a revelation from the God who directs mankind, and the embodiment of all that is exalted and sacred; and he would not allow it to be subtly explained away by the philosophy of the times. Sachs did not fail to observe the objectionable excrescences which had arisen on its surface, but he knew the cause of their origin, and believed that time, which had produced, would again destroy them. He hesitated, however, to lay hands upon them for fear of injuring the sound parts whilst removing the unsound and decayed. He would not trust himself, or any one, with the task of making innovations. This suspicion as to decisive reforms originated partly in his aversion to active measures, which was one of his failings. But as he was only human he could not be without faults. Another error on his part, which avenged itself upon him and upon the party he represented, consisted in his unconquerable dislike to join in common action, even with friends. Sachs would have joyfully subordinated himself to leaders whose sublimity of mind could have forced an expression of respect from him. But as he found no such characters among his contemporaries, he would not attach himself to men in no way superior to himself, or who did not even attain to his own standard. Thus he was of no greater weight as a party-leader than as a partizan.

The great qualities and small failings of Sachs taught him how the whole strength of his mind might be manifested: he was destined for the pulpit. The easy stream of his eloquence, his depth of thought, warmth of conviction, and grace of move-

ment, the charm that he exercised whilst interpreting the prophets and Agadists, the brilliant wit at his command, the beauty of his voice and his smooth diction—all combined to make him unsurpassed among the best preachers of his time, and he only found an equal in Mannheimer. When standing in the pulpit, Sachs appeared to be transfigured and oblivious of himself; it seemed as if one of the prophets of God were exhorting the people when he encouraged the despondent by his tidings of an ideal future, and appealed to their conscience. Even those of his hearers who did not share his convictions were carried away by his eloquence, and were compelled to yield him a tribute of praise. Sachs, however, was not only a persuasive speaker when in the pulpit, but also in ordinary conversation. His speech overflowed with the warmth of the sentiments which filled his heart. His impressive words, which were in unison with his ideas, attracted many faithful adherents to Judaism. Whosoever came into proximity with him was drawn as into a magic circle, and became impressed with his convictions. His influence was the greater because he never seemed to be making strenuous efforts to persuade, but only spoke in his ordinary manner. Nothing was more hateful to him than the display of official grandeur, of sham devotional fervour, and the care of souls, arising from interested motives.

In Prague, where he roused the inhabitants who understood German, both Christians and Jews, to a high pitch of enthusiasm, a happy chance brought him into connection with Rapoport (1840-44), the founder of Jewish science. An intimate friendship sprang up between these two men, whose education had been conducted on such different lines, and Sachs was introduced by his friend into the rich domain of Jewish literature, which had hitherto been only in part accessible to him, as his whole attention had been concentrated on the study of the



Holy Scriptures and on classical literature. His talent of accurately noting the most essential and excellent parts, and of storing what he read in his brain, soon made him master of this new material, and enabled him to impart it to a wide circle. But Sachs never became fully acquainted with the dialectics of the Talmud, which was Holdheim's strong point, and this territory remained foreign to him. Though he deeply lamented this deficiency in his knowledge, it was no real defect, for such studies did not accord with the Hellenic side of his nature, and would have destroyed the blossoms of his genius. As though destined to counteract the efforts of the Jewish German Church, which had now assumed form, and to become the opponent of Holdheim's universal negations, he was elected by the congregation of Berlin as preacher and Rabbi. Here, by instilling into the minds of his congregants the same Jewish confidence with which he was inspired, and a feeling of righteous pride in belonging to such an ancient, noble and cultured race, he succeeded to some extent in curing them of the evil habit of imitating Christianity to which they had so long been subject. This change in thought, which affected the most remote circles, weakened the antipathy which had been felt towards the Jews of Berlin, and which since the time of Friedländer had prevailed among other communities. Sachs became included among the most distinguished personalities of the Prussian capital; the cultured Christian world lavished attentions on him, although he did not seek them. Had he given vigorous and energetic effect to his words and made permanent alterations—for which plenty of opportunity would have been given him by the liberal Berlin community—perhaps the reform congregation might not have arisen.

He combated the reform tendency with all his strength. In Holdheim and his allies he beheld only perverters of Judaism and false leaders of the people,

and he openly expressed this opinion, for, as he often remarked, "Against insult and harsh words he was hardened and indifferent." From the pulpit he wielded the scourge of his annihilating scorn against the Jewish German Church, which had so limited the development of Judaism, that it could be contained in a nutshell. But even his opponents admitted that he only employed honourable weapons, the use of others being in direct contradiction to his noble nature. He did great harm to the Reform Temple. Persons who had heard Sachs' sermons no longer cared for those in the reform synagogue. A comparison between Sachs and his opposite, Holdheim, who was a contrast to him in every way, always resulted in favour of the former. Whilst the Temple where Holdheim preached continued to become more deserted, the Synagogue in which Sachs officiated, became more crowded week after week.

Sachs performed great services both in elevating and strengthening Jewish self-respect, as also in promoting Jewish knowledge. His contributions to the latter touch the form rather than the essence. He chiefly showed the way how the necessary studies should be pursued, and he rendered them accessible to educated Christians. Sachs did not indeed promulgate any novel truths or distinguish himself by discovering new facts. Nor was he a poetical artist who could create brilliant pictures or ideal worlds. There was more poetry in his life and teachings than in his verses. Through his refined perceptions he recognised and reproduced the slightest shades in the beauties which other artists had created, and he illustrated what other inquirers had discovered. The bent of his intellect was most distinctly displayed in his exegetical interpretation of Holy Writ. His fervent love of Judaism and its antiquities, his profound knowledge of Hebrew, which he treasured as a language precious to his heart,

and finally his delicate æsthetic feeling for philology, were all displayed in his work. Early in life Sachs conceived the idea to which he remained true till the last, viz., of producing a version of the Hebrew Scriptures which should be true to the pure and original sense, and free from all accretions and blemishes. Instigated by the example of Rückert, "the poet of the east and west, the learned master in translation and exposition," he commenced with the Psalms which contained such words as might have flowed from his own pious heart. Afterwards, assisted by various fellow-workers, Sachs translated several books of Holy Scripture in an admirable style to form a "Bible for Israelites." But as he worked more with his heart than his brain, his Biblical exegesis was wanting in a firm basis. The task of opening up new paths in this direction, therefore fell to the lot of Christian scholars.

Sachs took an active part in zealously excavating the hidden beauties of the Jewish past, in cleansing them from disfiguring incrustations, and in placing them in their proper light. Three periodicals were particularly devoted to this purpose—the "Kerem Chemed" and the "Zion" in Hebrew, and the "Orient" in German. Young and old assisted in erecting a Jewish temple of fame, and contributions flowed in from all parts of Europe. The "forties" were especially prolific in aiding the many-sided establishment of Jewish science. Dilettante scholarship was useless; close and earnest study was required to bring forward clear proof that Judaism, in all its ramifications, went hand in hand with civilisation. The Judæo-Spanish epoch exercised a special power of attraction for Jewish inquirers. It showed what the Jews had contributed in wealth of thought and beauty of form, and what they could still accomplish. Jewish science at the same time had to serve as an apology to the detractors of Jews and Judaism, and as an ideal



for arousing emulation. The brilliant Spanish epoch was alone known to Jewish scholars, and only in rough fragments. Sachs undertook to reconstruct from these fragments a systematized and beautiful whole, and by his eloquent language he attracted those who held themselves aloof from study. His "Religious Poetry of the Jews in Spain" (1845) offers more than the title signifies. In a glowing description Sachs traces the series of the products of Jewish genius, from the time "when in terrible agony the limbs were torn asunder from the living body," after the destruction of its centre by the Romans, until the flourishing period of Neo-Hebraic poetry in Spain. The attention of the cultured world was directed by Sachs' work to the wealth and beauty of Jewish literature in the Middle Ages, of which hitherto it had no suspicion; even Heine was seized with admiration, and employed his golden pen in its cause.

At the same time the literature of the mediæval Jews in France and Germany, and of the Jewish poets of Provence were treated with copious detail, but in a style fitted for a learned audience. Sachs justly rebuked his contemporaries for their contemptuous neglect of this branch of literature, to which Christian students of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had devoted so much attention.

Meanwhile such continuous devotion to the literature of the middle ages threatened to become too one-sided. That epoch, with its productions, was after all only the offspring of the national activity of bygone days, and the grandchild or great-grandchild of a still more important period. The obscure questions of the dual origin of Judaism, from the Bible and the Talmud, were clearly illumined by the light of investigation through Jewish science in the years of the "forties." The Talmud lay under a ban, and was treated with most offensive contempt. It was the

scapegoat upon which all the guilt and misery of the Jews was laid. Treated as an outcast, no one dared approach it, to examine it more closely. But this did not last; the question was raised whether the very writings which had served as the basis for Christianity owed their origin to the Talmud. The proof of the affirmative answer to this question was at once undertaken by Frankel. Yet more important was the fact that the strong point of the Talmud lay in its ideas of justice and their development. The superiority of the Talmudic punitive code over the legislation of ancient times was at once established. The result of a scientific treatment of the Talmud was that Judaism no longer had any cause to be ashamed of it.

But Judaism, together with its followers, had to remain an undecipherable hieroglyphic, a dark mystery which one century had transmitted to the other unsolved, so long as the "original rock from which it had been hewn, the depths from which it had been hollowed" continued to be unknown. Only a fundamental and indisputable knowledge of its primary sources and of its sacred origin could supply the key to this riddle. Centuries had elapsed and the solution was not yet found. Though Holy Writ as the mother of two or three religions had so long been deified by the masses that it was regarded as "the all in all," and its explanations of life, and history had been eagerly accepted, it had fallen into contempt since the middle of the eighteenth century. It shared the fate of the Jewish race. The rationalistic school indeed paid a good deal of attention to Hebrew sources, but only with the intention of diminishing their value. Eichhorn, Gesenius, von Bohlen, de Wette, and Tuch were filled with antipathy to the Jews, and were thereby hindered from arriving at a correct understanding of the Old Testament. The clericals Tholuck and Hengstenberg only sought to deck themselves out

with what they discovered, and they applied these discoveries to the uses of Christianity. In Jewish circles there were only three men who occupied themselves in a scientific manner with the exposition of the Scriptures, namely, Krochmal, Luzzatto and Sachs; but they timidly kept in the background, in order to avoid pressing too closely on the borders of Sinai. A man of childlike mind was the first to raise the veil for the profounder comprehension of the language of the prophets and Psalmists, and to reveal the ancient history of the Jewish people in its true light. With the appearance of "The Prophets of the Old Testament," and the "History of the People of Israel" (1843-1847) by Heinrich Ewald, a new path was opened up for the comprehension of the spirit and nature of the Hebrews. The riddle so long obscured approached its solution by the discovery of the key.

"The nations of antiquity, the Babylonians, Indians, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Greeks, and Romans, each under favourable circumstances pursued only one particular object, till at length they reached an eminence that could never again be attained by later generations. . . . The people of Israel, on the other hand, from the beginning of its historical consciousness, has so clearly kept in view its ultimate goal, and so strongly striven to attain it, that so long as its existence continues it will not cease from this ardent endeavour, and after any momentary pause will only pursue it the more perseveringly. Their goal is perfect religion. . . . The history of this ancient people is actually the history of this true religion which has developed at every step until the final completion."

The new school which arose, rich in hopes of the future, has, as its fundamental idea, that the race which owed its origin to the seed of Abraham is actually and truly a "people of God," and that it has filled the world with the truths of salvation in abundance. The unfolding of these truths is to be witnessed in the course of the history and in the literature of the Israelites. It is certainly a grave error of this school, which first commenced to unravel the artistic web, to imagine that the last page of the history of God's people was written eighteen



centuries ago, and that since that period it has only led a shadowy existence. Great memories bring about resurrections, and what people has a grander or more brilliant past than the Jewish, or Israelite, or Hebrew people? But if this people is still to accomplish work in the world's history, their chains must be removed from them, and not only those which weigh down the limbs, but also those which confine the mind. Let the nation be free, so that it can decide for itself whether it shall continue to be independent, or whether it shall succumb in the rushing stream of races.

Unexpectedly and with a shock the hour of freedom for the European Jews dawned simultaneously with the revolutions of February and March (1848) in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, in Italy and other countries. An intoxicating desire for liberty came over the nations of Europe, which was more overpowering and marvellous even than the movement in 1830. With imperious demands the people confronted their princes and rulers. Among other demands was that of the emancipation of the Jews. In all popular assemblies and proclamations, the despised Jews of yesterday were admitted into the bond of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." What the most sanguine had never ventured to hope for suddenly took place. Jews were elected into Parliament with a legislative vote in the reconstruction of States. A member of the Prussian Landtag had expressed his aversion to the idea that a Jew should one day sit beside him, and be able to vote. The following day it actually came to pass, for Riesser and Veit took their seats next to this very man, in order to consider the reconstruction of Germany, whilst Mannheim, together with Meisels, a Rabbi of the old school, clad in Polish garb, helped to reorganise Austria. An assembly of Protestant clergymen had declared that the conversion of a Christian to Judaism was a sign of insanity or idiocy, but yet

within a short space of time, the laws were compelled to concede freedom even to that very creed.

During the stormy years of the Revolution and those which followed, newly-established constitutions in Germany were plentiful as blackberries. When, however, the first panic of terror had passed away, and the privileges of nations had become greatly restricted, the emancipation of the Jews was nevertheless taken as a matter of course (even in such cases where a constitution had been forced upon the people), as though this unqualified "Vox populi vox dei" should not be in any way infringed.

It is probable that the partizans of the reaction, as also their rulers, did not intend to realise those paragraphs in the conditions, but the written words had unexpectedly worked like a magic rune. On England alone the storm-year had no effect. The disabilities imposed upon the Jews of that country were gradually put aside as occasions offered. Distinguished personages were elected as aldermen and sheriffs. But the last link in the chain, that of opposition to their admission into Parliament, had not yet been removed. When Baron Lionel de Rothschild was elected as representative of the City, in London, a Bill to confirm this election was repeatedly presented (in the years 1847-51), but after passing through the House of Commons with a majority, it was each time thrown out by the Peers. Although their opponents conceded that the Jews were worthy of admission to Parliament, they were nevertheless excluded by the formulary of the prescribed oath, "on the true faith of a Christian." Great was the sensation created when David Salomons, after he had filled the office of Alderman, and on being elected as member for Greenwich, was daring enough to enter the House, and on three occasions to take part in the debates. For this conduct he was fined £1,500, being £500 for each breach of the law. The absurdity of such exclusion became

the more striking, when the High Court of Appeal confirmed the heavy penalty (1852) as justifiable by law.

From that time the Liberal party determined to effect the abolition of the form of oath. As no prejudice prevailed in England against the descendants of the Patriarchs, but, on the contrary, a tendency existed in their favour, it was to be foreseen that this last limitation would also disappear. In fact, a few years later a resolution was passed in the House of Peers, that Jews should be admitted without having to take the prescribed oath, and this vote was immediately approved by Queen Victoria (1858). Since that time several Jews have occupied the post of Lord Mayor, Baron Nathaniel M. de Rothschild has been created a Peer, and the late Sir George Jessel, Master of the Rolls.

Meanwhile Judaism has made marked progress in another direction. A home for Jewish science was founded in Breslau (1854). It was a matter of pressing necessity, although the want was not universally felt. The march of progress surprised Judaism before the needful measures for remodeling its religious life, had been determined upon. Talmudical schools, even in Russia and Hungary, had collapsed for want of support. The Rabbis were useless in this emergency. Some who adhered to the old forms found that the congregations no longer appreciated their importance; others who visited the universities chiefly studied Christian theology, but were at a loss how to acquire Jewish knowledge. This knowledge only existed in an embryonic state. There certainly were various learned periodicals, both in Hebrew and in modern tongues, which treated of Jewish scientific subjects, but these only afforded fragmentary information. The teachers of Judaism needed, first of all, to learn, what is Judaism? What justification is there for it in the new phase of the world's history?



They did not know and could only grope about blindly. They were required to teach and had not yet acquired the rudiments of the subject. Their precious heritage, the Scriptures, was not sufficiently prized, and only a few specialists occupied themselves with this study, namely—Nachman Krochmal, Michael Sachs, and Samuel David Luzato—and even they only threw light upon certain points. Jewish theological students, unable to drink at the pure source of the word, listened to Christian exponents, and were led astray.

Jewish religious philosophy had still fewer representatives, viz., Solomon Steinheim and Solomon Munk. It is true that there existed a species of seminary (which was recognised by the State) for theologians, for French-Jewish students in Metz, and for Italian-Jewish students in Padua, but the instruction given was not based on scientific principles. It was, therefore, an event of no mean importance when a noble donor, Jonas Frankel, determined to supply the necessary funds for establishing a Jewish theological college. Fortunately, the undertaking was organised by men who stood at the summit of scientific knowledge—Zachariah Frankel\* (died 1875), Jacob Bernays (died 1882), and Emanuel Joel (died 1890). Although at first they were undecided as to the plan of study to be pursued, and as to the division of subjects, and the distinction to be made between the chief branches and subsidiary matters, yet they realised the saying that “one learns by teaching.” In a comparatively short space of time the chief posts in the more important communities in Germany, Austria, and Hungary were occupied by students from the Breslau College. So universally was the necessity recognised of having schools, that institutions for the study of Jewish theology were

\* The author of this work was, together with Frankel, one of the original founders. (Note by the Author.)

founded in Buda-Pesth, Berlin (two), Amsterdam, Cincinnati, and, in a modified form, also in London.

There is no more striking example of the transformation effected in Judaism itself than by comparing the various institutions, even those conducted in the true orthodox spirit, with the Talmud Torah schools (Beth ha-Midrash) amongst the Russian, and some amongst the Hungarian communities. These contrast both internally and externally like an architectural structure with a mud-hut.\*

The occasional recurrence of persecutions against the Jews awakened a feeling of brotherhood which was unexampled in Jewish history since the separation of Israel from Judah. The chief impulse to this feeling arose from the action taken by Pope Pius IX.

A Christian servant living at Bologna with a Jewish family named Mortara secretly took a sick child to be baptised. Some years later this fact came under the cognizance of the priests. Thereupon the boy Mortara, then six years old, was carried away from his parents, by the officers of the Papacy, and placed in a monastery (1858). All steps taken by the father, to regain possession of his son, were useless. Equally fruitless were the efforts of various Governments and even of the Emperor, Napoleon III., who protested against this act as one likely to injure the Papacy, if it countenanced so barbarous a proceeding in the nineteenth century, as the abduction of a child. Pius IX. at a former time had shown liberal tendencies, but he afterwards revived the narrow-minded course of action which prevailed in the Middle Ages, and even commanded that the Roman Jews should be shut up within the dreary walls of the Ghetto. Against all representations Pius IX. obstinately maintained

\* A Theological-Jewish Faculty, an offshoot of the University, and a Jewish Academy are still needed. (Note by the Author.)

his reply of "non-possumus." The boy Mortara was kept hidden away, and brought up in the ways of Catholicism; he eventually learned to curse his parents and his race. But the Papacy reaped no advantage. The loss of Rome, or of the so-called States of the Church, followed in close succession.

This event and similar acts of intolerance, induced six noble young Frenchmen to establish a sort of brotherhood for bringing help to those of their co-religionists who were oppressed and suffering. By their united efforts they endeavoured to ameliorate the condition of Jews, who lived under intolerant rulers, and to spread the advantages of education amongst those who stood in need of it. These men were Aristides Astruc, collaborator to the Chief Rabbi of Paris; Isidore Cohn, Professor of the Rabbinical College; Jules Caballo, engineer; Narcisse Léven, lawyer; Eugene Masuel, Professor at the University of Paris; and Charles Netter, merchant, only two of whom (Astruc and Léven) are still living. They founded an institution which bears the title of the "Alliance Israélite Universelle" (1860), having as its motto, "All Israelites are responsible the one for the other." This institution met with a cordial reception, and members joined from all parts of the globe. The accessions continued to increase, especially after Adolf Cremieux became president, and in 1873 the number of subscribers had already attained the high figure of 12,526.

In America, where in the year 1775-6, after the War of Independence, the republican form of government was adopted, the equality of the Jews was established as a matter of course. At first there were only a few Jewish immigrants in New York and Newport, but owing to the facilities offered to all industrial pursuits and every species of commercial activity, the number of American Jews rapidly increased. They also formed them-



selves into a body for the protection of their less favoured brethren, under the title of the "Union of American-Hebrew Congregations." They earnestly desired to promote the welfare of the Jewish communities, built numerous synagogues, and still continue to take a lively interest in all that concerns their brethren in Europe. In the year 1878 the Jewish-American population numbered about 250,000 souls, and maintained 278 synagogues. In these places of worship the reform ritual is chiefly followed. There being no communal traditions to abolish, the changes which in Europe could only be brought about after severe struggles, were easily introduced in America. Even such a radical reform as that of transferring the divine service from the Sabbath to Sunday, which had been originated by the insignificant Reform Congregation in Berlin, was copied in various American congregations. The warm sympathy displayed towards Judaism and the Jews by the Americans is to be highly commended, and to this sympathy the Union owed its origin.

The English Jews, to whom the task of leading their brethren seems to have been allotted, were not backward in uniting together, for the promotion of the well-being of their race. At the instigation of two excellent men, Abraham Benisch, editor of the "Jewish Chronicle" (died 1878), and Albert Löwy, one of the ministers of the Reform Congregation in London (whose unassuming character would be wounded were he to be praised according to his deserts), an institution was founded (1871) in connection with the Alliance Israelite, and was called the "Anglo-Jewish Association." Although the number of English Jews is comparatively small (about forty thousand in London and barely thirty thousand in other towns and the Colonies), yet the members of the Association number four thousand. An active correspondence is maintained through its

members between Australia, Canada, India, Gibraltar, and the parent body.

In Vienna, also, through the efforts of Joseph Wertheimer, Ignatz Kuranda, and Moritz Goldschmidt, an association was established under the name of the "Israelitische Allianz." Their main object was to work hand in hand with the "Alliance," but the primary task undertaken by them was to promote an improved condition of affairs amongst the Jews of Galicia. The Jews living in this province of Austria, who number about one million, are for the greater part in the lowest stage of culture. Owing to poverty and the heavy labour required to cultivate so barren a soil, they hardly made further progress than enables them to learn their prayers. Even those who possess the necessary ability and leisure to acquire European culture are kept back by the perversions of Neo-Chassidism, which possesses many followers amongst them. To raise them from their degraded condition is the praiseworthy object of the Viennese Alliance. The Alliance possesses about five thousand members.

This union amongst the flower of Judaism in common action, besides its civilising tendency, has also a defensive purpose, for the prevention of detraction and degradation. It could not, however, have been foreseen at the outset, that so wide a scope would have been presented for the work undertaken.

After the Jews had been emancipated in Western Europe, as they were in America, they laboured unceasingly at their own improvement, and could soon point out distinguished co-religionists amongst the highest ranks in every profession—Crown Lawyers, Councillors of State, Members of Parliament, Musicians, Authors, Academicians, and in France even amongst Generals.

The Jews of Western Europe became so amalgamated with their surroundings, that timid minds

began to fear lest Israel should be submerged in the current. But suddenly, and almost imperceptibly, they were confronted by a bitter enemy who endeavoured to exclude and oust them from the positions to which they had attained. This enemy all but challenged them to recall their past, prove their own value in opposition to their detractors, and show that though they were a peculiar people, this peculiarity is as much an agent in the world's history, as a product of it. This enemy, the bitterest Anti-Semitism, the offspring of delusion and falsehood, robs rejuvenated Israel of its peace, plays an active part in the immediate present, and unfortunately cannot as yet be relegated into the domains of History.

THE END.



## RETROSPECT.

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THE history of a people has here been narrated, which, dating from primæval times, continues to possess all the vitality necessary for its continued existence. Having entered the arena of history more than three thousand years ago, it shows no desire to depart therefrom.

This people, then, is both old and young. In its features the traces of hoary age remain indelibly impressed; and yet these very features are fresh and youthful, as if they were but of recent development. A nation, a relic of ages immemorial, which has witnessed the rise and decay of the most ancient empires, and which still continues to hold its place in the present day, deserves, for this fact alone, the closest attention. It must be borne in mind that the subjects of this History—the Hebrews, Israelites, or Jews—did not spend their existence in seclusion and contemplative isolation. Far from it! During all epochs they were dragged along in the fierce whirl of passing events. They struggled much, and suffered severely. The life of the people during more than three thousand years received many shocks and injuries. It still bears the trace of its many wounds, while no one can deny its right to the crown of martyrdom; and nevertheless it lives to the present day! It has accomplished much useful work, a fact that is gainsaid

by none except pessimists and malignant cavillers. Had it only succeeded in disillusioning the cultured portion of mankind from those deceptions of idolatry, which end in moral and social corruption, it would deserve special attention for this alone; but it has rendered far greater services to the human race. Whence came the high culture, on which the enlightened modern nations pride themselves? Surely they themselves have not originated it. They are simply the fortunate heirs of an ancient heritage, which they have turned to good account and have augmented.

There were but two nations of creative mind who originated this culture and raised humanity from the slough of barbarity and savagery. These two were the Hellenic and the Israelite people. There was no third race of coadjutors. The Romans, indeed, introduced and transmitted far-reaching social rules and a high degree of military science; but only when they had attained to a servile stage did they perform services comparable to those of the insect, which carries the fertilising pollen to the receptive stigma. The Greeks and the Hebrews were the sole originators of a higher culture. If the modern Roman, German and Slavonic nations, both on this side and on the other side of the ocean, could be despoiled of what they received from the Greeks and the Israelites, they would be utterly destitute. This idea, however, is a mere fancy; the nations can no longer be deprived of what they once borrowed, and what has since then become welded into their very nature. The participation of the Greeks in the regeneration of civilised races

is conceded without a dissenting voice and without a suspicion of envy. It is freely admitted that the Greeks scattered abroad the budding blossoms of art, and the ripe fruits of a higher intelligence; that they opened up the domain of the beautiful, and diffused the brightness of Olympic ideas. It is also acknowledged that their intellectual genius found its embodiment in their whole literature, and that from this literature and the surviving relics of their ideals in the fine arts, there still issues forth new life-giving energy. These classical Greeks are now long dead, and to the departed, after-comers are prone to be just. Jaundiced malignity and hatred are silent at the grave of the illustrious man; his merits as enumerated there are in fact, as a rule, overrated.

Now this aspect differs in the case of the other creative race. Just because of their continued existence, the merits and moral attainments of the Hebrews are not generally acknowledged, or are subjected to cavil—their qualities are depreciated under wrong designations, with the view of blackening their original character, or of denying altogether the efficacy of that character, and, although candid thinkers admit that the Hebrews introduced the monotheistic principle amongst the nations, and a superior code of morality, yet there are but few who appreciate the wide bearing of these admissions. Even deep thinkers do not carefully consider how it came to pass that the one nation died out notwithstanding its dominant master minds and its rich talents, while the other nation, so often near unto death, still continues to exist in the world of man,



and has even succeeded in regaining its pristine youthfulness. Notwithstanding the fascination of the mythology of the Greeks, the loveliness of their productions in art, and their vivifying wisdom, these qualities proved of no avail in the troublous days when the Macedonian phalanxes and the Roman legions, instead of allowing them to behold the joyous side of life, caused them to experience the seamy side. Then they despaired of their bright Olympus, and at best only retained sufficient courage to resort to suicide. In misfortune a nation displays characteristics similar to those of the individual. The Greeks were not gifted with the power of living down their evil fortune, or of remaining true to themselves when dispossessed of their territories; and whether in a foreign country or in their own land they lost their mental balance, and became merged in the medley of barbaric nations. What caused this total collapse? There was a potent reason for the extinction of the Romans, the mightiest nation of the ancient world, and likewise a reason for the extinction of their various powerful predecessors, for all of them relied too much on the sword. Even among nations this law of retribution holds good, "He who relies on the sword becomes the prey of the sword." But how was it that the Greeks succumbed to an analogous fate? The answer is, that they had no decided and clearly defined mission. The Hebrew people, on the other hand, had to fulfil the life-task by which it was held together, and by which in direst misfortune it was comforted and preserved. A nation cognisant of its mission, becomes strong and consolidated, and

forbears to spend its existence in futile dreaming and scheming. From a national standpoint it was the mission of the Israelites to work out their self-discipline, to overcome or regulate their selfish desires, to gain the full force of resignation, or, to use the words of the prophet, "to circumcise the heart." Abstinance, regarded from a religious standpoint, induced them to exercise self-restraint, and was combined with duties which sustained the health of body and soul. The history of humanity bears evidence to this. All the nations that polluted themselves by profligacy, and grew callous through violence, were doomed to destruction. Not so with the Israelite race. In the midst of a debauched and sinful world and amid vices with which, in its beginnings, the Jews were also infected, they yet freed themselves, they raised on high an exalted standard of moral purity, and thus formed a striking contrast to other nations.

The practical theory of life amongst ancient nations was intimately connected with their conception of the Divine; the one implied the other. Was their perverted morality the result of perverted theology, or its original cause? Whatever may have been the relationship between cause and effect, the injurious consequences remained the same. Polytheism, however poetically described, produces discord, passion and hate. In a council of gods, there must be strife. Even when the objects of worship are of a dual nature, the result is an inimical contrast—one god of creation and one of destruction, one god of light and one of darkness. The creative divinity is usually divided

into two sexes, and is endowed with all the frailties of sex. Although it has been said that man formed his gods according to his own image, yet when theology was once systematised, morality was demanded from the worshippers of the gods, who nevertheless became as sinful as the images which they adored. The people of Israel proclaimed a God at one with Himself, and unchangeable; a holy God, who requires holiness from mankind, the Creator of heaven and earth, of light and darkness. He, though mighty and exalted, is yet near to humanity, especially protecting the poor and the oppressed, a jealous but not a vengeful God, to whom the moral conduct of man is not a matter of indifference, although he is a God of mercy, and regards all mankind with love as the work of His hands. To this God evil is an abomination, for He is a God of justice, a Father to the orphan, and a Defender of the widow. These words of world-wide import penetrated deep into the heart of man, and, at a later period, were the means of hurling the beautiful gods of the heathen into the dust.

The thought and desire that men should be equal before the law as before God, that the stranger should have equal rights with the native, also grew from the idea of man's resemblance to the divine image, and became established amongst the Israelites as a fundamental law of the State. This was the first recognition of the rights of man, for among the nations of old, even the leaders of civilization never conceded that right which has now become an established rule. If a stranger, wrecked on a foreign shore, was no longer offered



up as a sacrifice, as had been the case in the earliest times, he was nevertheless placed under exceptional laws, and only considered to be a degree higher than a slave. This harshness towards the stranger, to the disgrace of nations, actually survived the destruction of the ancient world.

Israel's dominant idea became of far-reaching importance in its ethical tendency. It is by no means a matter of indifference in the moral conduct of man, both as regards great and small things, whether the earth, the scene of action, is governed by one Power or by several mutually antagonistic forces. The one conception ensures unity and peace, the other unveils a picture of dissension and discord, and leads to barbarism. The likeness of man to God—in opposition to the blasphemous idea of God's likeness to man—and the train of thought arising from monotheism impresses man with self-respect and with a regard for his fellow-man. Thereby the life of even the humblest of men is placed under religious and moral protection.

Is the abandonment of the new-born infant by its parents a crime? Amongst the ancients, even amongst the Greeks, it was not so regarded. The mountains resounded with the wailings of female children, and the rivers bore along the corpses of the little creatures, whom their parents (finding it inconvenient to rear them) had cast into the depths of the streams without a pang or regret. The ancients felt no prick of conscience at sight of a murdered infant, and still less would a tribunal of justice demur at such crime. To kill a slave was

of no more consequence than to slay an animal in the chase. Why, then, do cultured persons now shudder at the idea of such misdeeds? Because the people of Israel proclaimed the law, "Thou shalt not kill, for in the image of God has man been created. Thou shalt not take even a young life, nor one whose existence is passed in servitude." It has been asserted that man's intellect has made giant strides, whilst his moral culture has remained far behind, or has progressed but little since primæval times. But it must be remembered that the barbarous state of man declined much later than his ignorance.

Slumbering conscience and a repugnance to crime only became aroused at a later period, and this awakening was due to the people of Israel. Still less did the ancient nations recognise chastity of conduct, for they were sunk in the depths of vice and unchastity. Whilst the nations were still at the pinnacle of their greatness, the Jewish Sybilline poets repeatedly uttered warnings that the sinful nations would be given over to death because of their unnatural vices, their atrocities and perverted worship, and the abominations which had ensued in consequence.

But they only scoffed at the warning voice, continued to pursue their evil ways, and were destroyed. Their arts and their wisdom could not save them from death. This shows that the Israelite nation alone and solely effected the emancipation of man by proclaiming holiness of life, the equal rights of aliens and home-born, and all that is included in the term humanity. It is not superfluous

to point out—that the foundation-stone of culture, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” was laid by this people. Who prayed that the poor might be raised from the dust; the suffering, the orphan, and the helpless from the dunghill? The Israelite people. Who declared that everlasting peace was the holy ideal of the future, “when one nation should no longer draw sword against the other, and should no longer learn the art of war”? Israel’s prophets. That people has been called a wandering mystery, but it should rather be called a wandering revelation. It has revealed the secret of life, and the art of all arts—how a nation may guard itself against being given up to destruction.

This people cannot be charged with having introduced self-mortification, self-torture, and a gloomy view of life, and as having thus paved the way for that monkish asceticism, which covers the brightness of life with the pall of death. Quite the contrary; all the nations of antiquity except the Israelites laid especial importance on death, made immolations at the graves of the departed, and gave themselves up to a pious melancholy. These were the mysteries which, like all exaggerations, passed to an opposite extreme, and ended in the excesses of orgies. The gods themselves did not escape contact with death; they had to make a death-journey, and here and there might be seen the grave, or the calvary of some god. The Israelite conception, which revered in God “the source of life” places so much value on life, that it seeks to banish from the circle of holiness all that recalls death. So little is thought of what lies within and beyond the grave, that



the Israelites have been reproached with having solely indulged in the enjoyments of life. And this is true.

The prophets knew no higher ideal than that the earth should be filled with a knowledge of God as the sea covers its bed. Life is highly prized, but it must be a pure and holy life. Only after a long and unhappy course of history did a gloomy and ascetic theory of life creep in, and produce a sad and misanthropic order, which stamped out pure gladness as a sin, and regarded the earth as a valley of tears, and to this condition it actually became, to some extent, reduced.

The Israelite people has nothing in common with their kindred, who are called Semites, whether in their self-torturing madness in honour of one god, nor in their dissipated excesses in honour of another god. The Israelites were severed from the Semitic tribes by hard discipline, and they weaned themselves from the perversions of their alien kinsmen. It is likewise erroneous to endeavour sophistically to attribute the peculiarities of Israel as due to the Semitic character, or to consider the relationship of the two nations as that of two descendants from one stock. The Israelites and other Orientals, through divergent causes, are the result of a mixed union, and both have lost many traits of their inherited nature.

The Israelites decidedly have great faults; they have greatly erred, and have been severely punished for their shortcomings. History describes and reveals these errors, their origin, their eventful results, and the consequences which resulted from them. Many of these faults were acquired, and were to some

extent the effect of their surroundings; but there were also peculiar and original features in the character of this people. Why should they be more perfect than all other nationalities, not one of which has ever attained to perfection in all directions?

Those who eagerly endeavour to show the failings and shortcomings of the Israelite people as through a magnifying glass unconsciously pay them high honour by making greater demands upon them than upon other nations. It is a decided defect on the part of the Israelites that they left behind neither colossal buildings nor architectural memorials. Possibly the race did not possess any talent for architecture; or perhaps, owing to its ideals of equality, the kings and warriors were not so highly esteemed that it was considered necessary to erect in their memory stupendous palaces, pyramids, or marble monuments. The hovels of the poor ranked higher. The Israelites did not even erect a temple to God (Solomon's Temple being built by the Phœnicians), for the heart was God's temple. The Israelites neither sculptured nor painted gods, for they did not consider the Deity as a subject for pleasant pastime, but gave Him pious and earnest devotion. Nor did the Israelites excel in artistic epics, and still less in drama or comedy. This may have been a want in their idiosyncrasy, and is also connected with their strong distaste for mythological births and scandals. They evinced also a similar dislike to all dramas, public games, and theatrical displays. However, in compensation, they had poetical conceptions which adequately reflect the ideals of life, as these are described in

the Psalms and in the poetically fashioned eloquence of the prophets. Both possess this trait in common, that their fundamental quality is truth and not fiction, whereby poetry instead of being a mere toy and plaything for the imagination, became the instrument for attaining ethical culture.

Their literature, though it does not treat of the drama, is yet full of dramatic vigour; and, if not actually humorous, is nevertheless replete with irony, and from its ideal pedestal proudly contemplates all delusions. The Israelite prophets and psalmists, whilst developing a beautiful poetic form, never sacrificed the truth of the subject for the sake of style. The Israelites also introduced a historical style of their own, which pictured events according to the canons of truth, and without any endeavour to excuse or hide the shortcomings of heroes, kings, or nations. This peculiar Hebrew literature, of which no other nation on earth can show the like (at best only an imitation) through its excellence, has achieved many moral conquests. The nations who were capable of culture could not withstand the warmth and truth which pervades these writings. If Greek literature elevated the dominion of art and its perceptions, Hebrew literature idealised the domain of holiness and morality. The history of a nation which has achieved so much has a decided right to full appreciation.

Judged superficially, the course of history from the entry of the Israelites into Canaan until far into the times of the kings, may easily give rise to misconception, for the most striking events seem to bear a political character. Invasions, battles,



and conquests, occupy the foreground of history. We behold on the scene, leaders of nations, heroes, kings, and generals, treaties are made and broken, whilst the prevailing intellectual activity is hardly perceptible in the background. The hero-judges who first form the subjects of history—Ehud, Gideon, his son Abimelech, and especially Jephthah and Samson—evinced so few of the national characteristics that they might equally well pass for Canaanites, Philistines, or Moabites. Of Samson it has been asserted that he is cast in the mould of the Syrian Hercules. Most of the kings, and also their sons and courtiers, acted as arbitrarily as if there had been no code of law to set limits to their despotic will, and as if they had never even heard of the Ten Commandments of Sinai.

For centuries the people wore the bonds of wild idolatry, and differed only in a slight degree from the heathen world which surrounded them. Was the race in its beginnings actually of no importance? Did the people for a considerable time keep pace with their Semitic kinsmen, and only at a given period become stamped with those peculiarities which caused it to contrast so strongly with its neighbours? Did not Sinai illumine its very cradle? or was this fact only stated to have been the case in after-days and by historians? Sceptics have said as much, but the fragments of Israelite poetry, dating from primæval times, give the lie to this assertion. Several centuries before the inception of kingly rule, and in the first days of the hero-judges, in the days of Deborah, “the mother in Israel,” a poet sang of the marvels of the revelation; at Sinai

he described the people of God as contrasting strikingly with their environment, and ascribed their lapses to the fact that they had followed "false gods," and thereby fallen away from their widely different origin. Even if one were inclined to doubt the veracity of history, yet credence must be given to poetry as a trustworthy eye-witness. It is not to be denied, that the spiritual birth of the Israelite people commenced simultaneously with their actual birth, and that Sinai was the scene of the one event, as Egypt was of the other; and that the Ark of the Covenant with the sacred Ten Commandments was its faithful attendant, from the earliest days.

The nucleus of the people's faith in God and in their mission, the fundamental doctrine graven on the tablets of stone, were both of hoary antiquity and coeval in age with that of their representatives. Men especially chosen, and having no connection with the work-a-day actions and turmoil of the people, like the Cherubim at Shiloh, were to shield the sanctuary. This sanctuary only apparently bears a religious stamp, is only apparently theocratic, but its essence is contained in the laws of morality. God is the origin of the doctrine, but not its end, which lies rather in individual and communal life and its legitimate demands.

In this law God is the Holy Will, determining whatever is ethical and good. He is the sacred Type which indicates the way, but not the cause for which actions are to be performed, in order that some definite advantage may accrue. The Israelite creed is, therefore, by no means a dogmatic doctrine, but

one of duty. Though a law of deliverance, it has no mystic admixture. But this religion or law of redemption was certainly beyond the comprehension of the people while yet in its infantine stage, and the ideal which was intended to endow it with significance and vitality remained for a long time an enigma to the people. This enigma was first solved by the prophets. A considerable period elapsed even after the prophets had spoken their burning words of fire, before the nation became the guardian of the teachings heard at Sinai, and before they erected a temple for it in their own hearts.

But as soon as this maturity was attained and the "heart of stone had become a heart of flesh" as soon as the prophetic body were able to dispense with the intervention of the priesthood, they could depart from the scene; they had become superfluous, for the nation itself had attained to a complete comprehension of its own being and its own mission. History shows how this two-fold transformation was effected; how the family of a petty sheik became the nucleus of a people; how this small people was humiliated to the condition of a horde; how this horde was trained to become a nation of God through the law of self-sanctification and self-control; and how these teachings, together with a spiritual ideal of God, became breathed into it, as its soul.

This national soul likewise grew into the national body, became developed and took the form of laws, which, though they were not subjected to the fluctuations of time, were yet suited to the occurrences of the age. The transformation was



only effected amidst severe struggles; obstacles from within and without had to be overcome, and errors and relapses to be amended, before the nation's body could become a fitting organ for the nation's soul. The hidden things had to be revealed, the obscure to be illumined, vague notions to be brought into the light of certainty, before that ideal Israel (as foreshadowed by the prophets in the far distance of time, and which had been expressly distinguished by them from Israel as it then existed with all its defects), might become a "light unto the nations." Assuredly, there is no second people now dwelling upon the globe, or hidden within the stream of time, which, like Israel, has carried with it a pre-ordained law. This people not alone possessed such a law, but also the full conviction that it existed only on account of this law, and in order to be the exponent of this law, and that its sole importance lay in its vocation to announce the truths of salvation. These were to be inculcated not by violence and compulsion, but by example, by action, and by the realisation of those ideals which as a people the Israelites were to proclaim.

The profound insight afforded by History has proved that it was the mission of the Greeks to bring to light the ideals of art and science, but the Greeks themselves had no knowledge of this fact.

It was otherwise with the Israelites. Not only was their task apportioned to them, but the revelation was made to them that it was their task, and that without it they were of no more significance than "a drop in the pitcher, or a mote of dust in

the balance." Only on this account did the men of God call the Israelites a chosen people. The fact of being chosen imposed on the nation more important and heavier responsibilities, and a greater measure of duty; and when their mission, as the exponents of a special and religious moral conception became clear to them, the people prized their task beyond all things—more highly than their fatherland and nationality, and even more than life itself. And because they sacrificed themselves, the idea which dominated them attained to enduring existence and to immortality.

The Israelites were the first people who possessed the courage of their own opinions, and who risked all worldly goods for their convictions. They proved that a propaganda-making truth can only be sealed by the blood of its martyrs. The loyalty of their convictions endowed them with steadfastness and endurance. Their inner core cannot have been utterly corrupt, seeing that they were enabled to bid defiance to the destructive force of nearly four thousand years, and to a host of enemies. The history of the Israelite nation in its beginnings is of a decidedly changeful character. Two distinct factors determined its elevation and decadence, one being physical, and one spiritual, one political and the other ethical. Suddenly, there gushed forth a spiritual current, strong and foaming like the mountain spring, which has been gradually gathering whilst hidden from sight, and the existence of which did not commence only at that moment when it issued from its rocky bed.

The appearance of gifted prophets and psalmists

from the days of Amos and Isaiah resembles, in its force and fertilising power, the outpouring of a mountain spring. The prophets and psalmists who sowed the seed of great and ever true thoughts in a charming and attractive form, and who constitute the flower of the Israelite people, could not have arisen and carried out all that they actually succeeded in effecting, unless the previous conditions had been favourable to their purpose. They arose because the soil had been spiritually fertilised for them, and they were understood only because their exalted moral theories of life did not announce anything that was novel or strange to the people, but they preached what was already well known, in impassioned and poetically-illuminated words, and were impelled by self-negation, zeal, and manly courage.

Even those who do not believe in wonders must admit and admire the marvellous course of Israel's history. Is it not marvellous that just during the untoward conditions of the Babylonian exile, in a country "full of idols and license," and amongst a Judæan nobility who, untaught and unconverted by their sad experience, still continued their evil ways during exile—that amid such surroundings a spiritual movement could be developed which found vent in a peculiarly characteristic manner? During the Babylonian exile the psalmists bewailed in touching strains, and with poetic brilliance, their own sorrows and the national misfortunes, and these strains resound even to-day in the high-places of worship.

During this exile that magnificent didactic poem in semi-dramatic form between the suffering Job and his friends was composed, a poem consisting in



dialogues on human destiny and Divine Providence; and which is almost unrivalled. During this exile the prophets once more addressed their deaf and blind community in poetic strains. Amongst them was that divinely-favoured man, the second Isaiah, who was called the "great unknown." His words of fire pour forth with inimitable power, chastising like a father, yet comforting like a mother, wounding as with a lash, and yet healing as with balm. This prophet fully established the fundamental idea for the justification of Israel's continued existence, that, by its submission of martyrdom, it is destined to be the servant of God, to become a light to all nations, and to carry salvation to the ends of the earth. Is it less marvellous that Cyrus accorded to the Babylonian exiles the permission to return to their native land, to cultivate the deserted country, to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple in honour of their God, and again to enjoy a certain amount of independence? Still more wonderful is it that prophets had predicted with unqualified certainty the regeneration of the nation in a single day, and that the exodus from Egypt would be succeeded by an exodus from Babylon. Even their prophecy that the heathen would join the Judæan people was fulfilled. Thus the Judæan nationality became resuscitated in their own land, the people became filled with ancient recollections and new hopes, and were determined to realise the exhortations of the prophets. The people preserved their independence in their own country during six hundred years. The proneness to idolatry, which, to a great extent, had been found irresistible in the

pre-exilic period, suddenly disappeared, and with it also pagan customs and vices. The Torah, as the law book, was to become the guiding-line of the regenerated nation, whose "heart of stone had been changed into a heart of flesh," and not only to the individual but to the whole community. By periodically reading the Torah in the Synagogue—a custom which was now introduced—and by explaining it at least in one of the school-houses, its teachings became the common property of the higher classes. The Torah was the "Magna Charta" of public life in the same way as the Judæan community developed into a species of "Civitas Dei."

The prophets could now withdraw, for the law-givers — Pharisees (Soferim) — relieved them of their duties, and created a Synhedrion, which also possessed a legislative function. Thus post-exilic history received a form entirely different to that of pre-exilic times. The tribunal of the Synhedrion was filled with a painful anxiety as to the rigid execution of pentateuchal ordinances. The teachers of the people desired to avoid the repetition of pre-exilic conditions, of idolatry, intercourse with the heathen, and the imitation of pagan customs. Entire separation from the heathen world and total isolation was the consequence. A similar state of things was also maintained against the Samaritans, who defiantly sought to obtain equal rights of citizenship in the "Civitas Dei." This was denied to them. As, however, they would not be prevented from worshipping the God of Israel, they erected a rival temple on Mount Gerizim. Thus there arose the first semi-Judæan sect, that

of the Samaritans, who assumed an inimical bearing towards Jerusalem. This was one result of over-punctiliousness. The other consequence was the result of the maxim, "Make a fence round the law." Thereby everything which had formerly been permissible, and which only touched on the fringe of what was forbidden, became interdicted. The members of the Synhedrion, or authorized teachers of the law, on the ground of this maxim, added fresh decisions to the pentateuchal laws. These new sopheric laws, and the prevailing punctiliousness, did not prevent the establishment of Jewish colonies in Alexandria, Antioch, and other Greek centres which had been founded by Alexander of Macedon and his successors. The Jewish colony in Egypt built a special Temple, that of Onias, which rivalled the sanctuary at Jerusalem. There the law was first translated into Greek, and in this language it was read in all Greek-speaking countries. This was a turning-point in the course of Jewish history, although, owing to the practice of reading the law in Greek, public mourning was instituted in Jerusalem. Judaism from this cause became, to some extent, more closely approximated to the pagan world, and the accession of nations into the community of Abraham was promoted. On the other hand, the Hellenising of Judaism brought the nation close upon the verge of destruction, and exposed it to the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, and also to apostasy. From these troubles it was only delivered through the revolt of the Maccabees, whose rising was the cause of many martyrdoms.

These victories were followed by a retrograde



movement. The laws which the Hellenist apostates had daringly broken, and on account of which so many martyrs had fallen, even those laws which had been superadded as a fence, were henceforth yet more zealously and scrupulously practised. Judaism assumed an altered Pharisaic (*i.e.*, punctilious) character. For a portion of the people, the over-scrupulous (Assidæans), even this was not sufficient. They imagined that only by retirement from the world could the laws be strictly followed, and therefore, under the designation of Essenes, they separated from the rest, and followed their particular mode of thought and peculiar observances. The more worldly, such as the warriors and statesmen, offered a sharp opposition to such asceticism, and rejected the additional ordinances which were not justified by the letter of the law. Hence arose the division into Pharisees, Essenes, and Sadducees, which was one of the results of the Maccabæan war. Internal dissensions ensued, and facilitated the subjugation of Judæa by Pompey and the Roman legions, and the political independence of the Judæans under their own king, which had been maintained during a century, now came to an end.

Unfortunately, the Romans appointed their protégé, Herod, to be king, and he instilled his venomous ideas into the hearts of the Patriarchs. In order, to some extent, to shield the populace from the alienation desired by the Herodians, the exclusive laws, and more particularly the ritual ordinances, were made more stringent. This was the work of Hillel and Shammai. Further, a fanatical zeal was displayed in commemorating the liberty

which had been disgracefully forfeited; this was the work of the founder of the zealot party—Judah of Galilee—with whom the Shammaites were to some extent connected. The zealots incited the whole nation to wage fierce war against the Roman conquerors of the world, but their attempt ended in the destruction of the community and of Jerusalem, and the greatly-revered Temple was laid waste. It is, however, a marvellous fact that the nationality and the religion did not perish, but survived the destroyers Vespasian, Titus, and their successors, as they had survived Nebuchadnezzar and his dynasty. The populace was rescued through the law, which had become its very soul. The Synhedrial school-house now became the centre, but the law had totally changed in aspect.

Masses of new religious enactments now overlaid the law; fences, Synhedrial enactments, customs dating from more ancient or from recent times, which had been orally delivered, and had accumulated to an immense extent. These oral Halachas, as they were termed, ranked, if not higher, yet equally with the written laws.

The Sadducean opposition to these laws had ceased; young Christendom, which had sprung from the lap of Judaism, or, to speak more correctly, from Essenism, enhanced the highly-prized and overrated value of the laws, and was indifferent as to their origin. In contradistinction to the Judæo-Christians, who thought they could merge the old laws with the new faith, the apostle Paul created the Pagan-Christian idea, which rejected every prescription of the law as entramelling, and proclaimed

evangelical liberty. This attack on the law, and the mystic formulas evolved by the Gnostics from the letters of Holy Writ, caused all that bordered upon religious precepts to become more precious and to be more rigidly observed in Judæan circles.

The transmission of Halachic doctrines had been endangered in consequence of the divergence of opinion between the disciples of Hillel and Shammai regarding their scope, limits, justification and applicability, and in consequence of the fatal termination of the disastrous war. Those teachers of the law who had survived the catastrophe were the more eager to hand down such laws, which they claimed to have transmitted faithfully, and to rescue them from oblivion. Youths and men, now rid of political cares, thronged to the celebrated colleges in order to impress on their memories the traditions handed down to them. They vied with each other in teaching and learning. But this eagerness did not crush out zealotism and a desire to take up arms in the cause of freedom. Fiery youths, especially the disciples of the school of Akiba, quitted the school-house in order at an opportune moment to carry on a bloody feud with the Roman legions—in the first instance this occurred under Trajan, scarcely half a century after the fall of Jerusalem, and again two decades later under Hadrian. These attempts ended disastrously; Hadrian instituted a system of persecution which was directed more against Judaism than against the Judæans, and especially against the teachers and disciples, in the hope of destroying the Law, the very soul of the nationality, but he did not succeed



in his object. The fiery zeal for the traditional law was increased through the activity of Akiba's disciples, who had returned from exile.

The centre was however transferred to Galilee, as Judæa, the southern portion of the country, had been laid waste and was chiefly in the possession of pagan colonists. Here was situated the Patriarchate which represented the unity of the people, the post of Patriarch being occupied by a descendant of Hillel, who, as it was alleged, came from the royal house of David, and who, from the tiny territory of Galilee, from Sepphoris and Tiberias, governed the numerous communities of the Diaspora—beyond the land and the sea, in Egypt, Babylon, Asia Minor, and Europe. His encyclicals, which were sent by special messengers, were greeted with respect, and were obeyed like those of a spiritual chief. The Mishnah, the fundamental text of the voluminous Talmud, a collection of Halachic laws, and species of "corpus juris civilis canonici," which was compiled by the Patriarch Judah I., owed its universal recognition to that cause. This spiritual greatness, however, was destroyed through Byzantium, from the time that the Roman Empire worshipped, or was compelled to worship, Jesus instead of Jupiter, and the fanatical persecution practised mutually amongst the Christian sects became visited upon the Jews.

The Byzantine emperors, Constantine, Theodosius II. and Justinian, treated the sons of Jacob even more mercilessly than their heathen enemies. They deprived them of their Roman rights of citizenship, of their rights as men, and also encroached

upon their freedom in religious practices. This example was followed by the rulers in various European countries, more especially in France and Spain.

Fortunately, there had been formed a new centre in another quarter, on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris, where numerous Judæan communities occupied a favourable position, and lived almost in a state of political independence, under their own Judæan prince, the Exilarch. The schools which were here established replaced those which had been destroyed in the Holy Land. These schools exercised authority over the entire Jewish community, with but few interruptions, during seven hundred years. Here there arose the Babylonian Talmud, which was more fortunate than its companion-work, the Palestinian or Jerusalem Talmud, a religious code of a peculiar kind. This work with its phases of light and shade exercised an influence in Jewish circles (which continues to the present day), and it almost over-shadowed Holy Writ. Here also Talmudical dialectics became developed, and endowed those Jews who stood beneath the spell of the Talmud with peculiar characteristics, especially imbuing them with that love of hair-splitting which afterwards deteriorated into sophistic subtlety. The authority of the Talmud, however, was to some extent lessened through events which occurred on the Arabian Peninsula. Mahomet, the son of Abdallah, from Mecca, had established the Islamite religion on the basis of various fragments of Judaism. The Arabs at first lived on friendly terms with the Judæans who dwelt in their land, and who were warlike, lovers of freedom and of

song, and superior to the Arabs by reason of their possession of Holy Writ. Mahomet, however, having been derided by them, afterwards waged war against one Judæan tribe after another and exiled them from Arabia, which proscription was upheld by Caliph Omar.

The exiles settled in Palestine and Babylon, where they became acquainted with tribesmen and co-religionists who, having followed the Talmudical precepts, had acquired totally different habits. They found the Talmudical restrictions incompatible with their hereditary and unquenched thirst for liberty. This Judæo-Arabic circle declared war against Talmudism. The contest, which in the first instance was only of a mild character, the needful ability to sustain it being wanting, afterwards became fiercer when Anan, a connection of the Prince of Captivity, eagerly joined in the fray, asserting Holy Writ to be the sole source of religion, and that the Talmud was only the work of man.

Thus arose a new sect, the Ananites, or Karaites. Although they consisted only in a small majority, yet by their energy and combativeness they aroused the less active minds, and stimulated the desire for a knowledge of Holy Writ, which had hitherto fallen into neglect. The impulse given to this study was so powerful that Saadiah, the representative of a Talmudical school, devoted his entire attention to it. Through him a philosophical tendency was introduced into Judæan circles. Until this time, as in Christendom and Islam, a belief in existing authorities had caused it to be considered heretical to speculate upon religion.



From Babylon there now emanated a spark of rational thought and scientific inquiry, which travelled as far as the Pyrenean Peninsula. This territory, being under Mahomedan rule, was connected in spirit with the East. A long succession of eminent personages had during two centuries fostered and cultivated a spirit of deep research in Spain, whilst in Christendom a fanatical desire for persecution resulted in the destruction of the Jews, or in their banishment from the homes which they had possessed for so long a time. The culminating point of philosophical thought was attained by Moses Maimuni, who for centuries was "the Guide of the Perplexed," and who also, under the sanction of the Church, exercised a powerful influence on Dominican scholasticism. Where there is great light there must also be much shadow. The shadows caused by the light which had proceeded from Maimuni became embodied in the vagaries of the Kabbala, which confused the minds of the multitude by its forgeries, and corrupted the feelings by its excesses.

A deep gulf was created in Spain and Southern France between the Maimunists and anti-Maimunists, between faith based upon intellectuality, and faith based upon authority. This schism would have given rise to sectarianism, had not the accumulated sufferings of the people rivetted their attention on what was proximate—the misery of all. Faith in authority proved victorious, under the influence of the Kabbala, and every scientific pursuit, excepting that of medicine, was proscribed in Spain, as if it were intended to undermine the

continuance of Judaism. The fourteenth century ignored the tenth century. Solomon ben Adret, who had solemnly pronounced an interdict against philosophy, ranked Saadiah as being to some extent a heretic. It seemed as if, with the decay of knowledge, the glory of the Spanish Jews were to be entirely extinguished.

The cup of sorrow, drained by the Jews throughout Central Europe—from the Rhine to the Vistula, and from the Alps to the marsh-lands of the German Ocean—in consequence of the Black Death, as if they had indeed been poisoners, also reached the Spanish Jews. Their grandees, who had been employed at the Court as Ministers of Finance, Diplomats, Private Secretaries, or Court Physicians, were powerless to protect them, as they had formerly done.

The horrible massacre in 1391 had driven many Jews, with wild despair in their hearts, into the arms of the Church, and they deceived themselves with the idea that they could outwardly join the Church, whilst remaining inwardly faithful to the God of Israel.

Thus arose the Marranos. Their fanatical persecutors, however, knew no peace until they had succeeded in arousing the thunders of the Inquisition against the Jews, in lighting the stake, in causing them to be banished from Spain by hundreds of thousands, and in enforcing compulsory baptism in Portugal. But the Inquisition and the stake in both of these countries only awoke a deeper love for Judaism in the hearts of the Marranos. Great as was the number of those who perished at the Auto-

da-Fés, or who pined away in prison, yet their offspring, after one or two centuries, who had secretly continued to cherish their own faith at the risk of their lives, sought to escape from the hell on the Pyrenean Peninsula.

Under the guise of Spanish or Portuguese merchants, they founded large communities in Bordeaux, Amsterdam, London, and also in various parts of Italy. From their step-fatherland they brought with them a higher culture and an aristocratic demeanour. Consequently they did not suffer from the contempt with which other Jews were treated in political and social circles. In fact, the Jews of Marrano descent, looked down upon their co-religionists as gypsies, on account of their external deterioration. With marvellous rapidity, however, did those who were considered as gypsies regenerate and elevate themselves; and, what was more marvellous, this change did not proceed from the aristocratic Sephardim. The personage to whom this transformation was due sprang from the midst of those who were so despised and contemned. He bore no trace of culture in his youth, but was deformed, awkward, and shy—this was Moses Mendelssohn, from the petty community of Dessau. Had the call reached him to become the leader of his co-religionists, he would have replied, like the great Prophet in Egypt—“Who am I?” It is remarkable that Mendelssohn, without desiring or intending to do so, paved the way for the emancipation of the Jews and the purification of Judaism. The present age has given the lie to the assertion of Jew-haters (who at the close of the eighteenth



century and commencement of the nineteenth century were numberless), that generation after generation must pass away before any improvement could be expected in the debased condition of the Jews.

In two decades there appeared on the canvas of History a series of noble, if not of ennobled Jews, in Germany, France, Holland, and Italy, and these ranked as high as if they had been of equal birth with Christians of the aristocratic class.

The historic course of the Israelite nation not only shows, as with other nations, the stages of growth, bloom and decay, but it exhibits the extraordinary phenomenon that the decay was succeeded, on three different occasions, by a new budding and blossoming time. The history of the crystallization of the Israelite family group into a nation, and their entry into the land of Canaan, until the establishment of a kingdom, constitutes the growth. The stage of bloom was in the days of the kings David and Solomon, who raised the condition of the Israelite people to that of a state of the first rank. The period of blossoming was only short, and was followed by a loss of power and by the downfall of the nationality. But again it gradually revived under the rule of the Persians and Greeks, developed under the Maccabees, only to decay away under the Romans. This decay, however, was merely superficial, and was destined to give place to a resuscitation in another form.

One of the prophets has represented the growth of the Israelite nation in Egypt by the picture of a deserted female child left lying in the fields,

begrimed with blood and filth, but who, notwithstanding her desertion and misery, develops into a blooming maiden. The development of the race in Babylon is described by another prophet under the image of an unhappy and sorrowing widow, who has been robbed of her children, until, on the unexpected return of her numerous offspring from all ends and corners of the earth, she is comforted and regains her lost youth with them. For the third rejuvenescence of the Jewish race tradition has likewise found a fitting picture.

At the gates of Rome there lies a human form, clothed in rags, leprous, half dead, an object of horror and pity. Suddenly, this abject figure is touched with a staff, on which Biblical sentences are inscribed. He rises, his hideous coverings and disfigurements vanish, and he stands erect in the beautiful glow of youth. Similes are but lame, and give no adequate representation of a phenomenon to which there is no equal in every-day existence. In any case, the Jewish nation is an extraordinary phenomenon, dating as it does from hoary antiquity, but possessing youthful vigour, having passed through numberless vicissitudes, and yet remaining ever true to itself.

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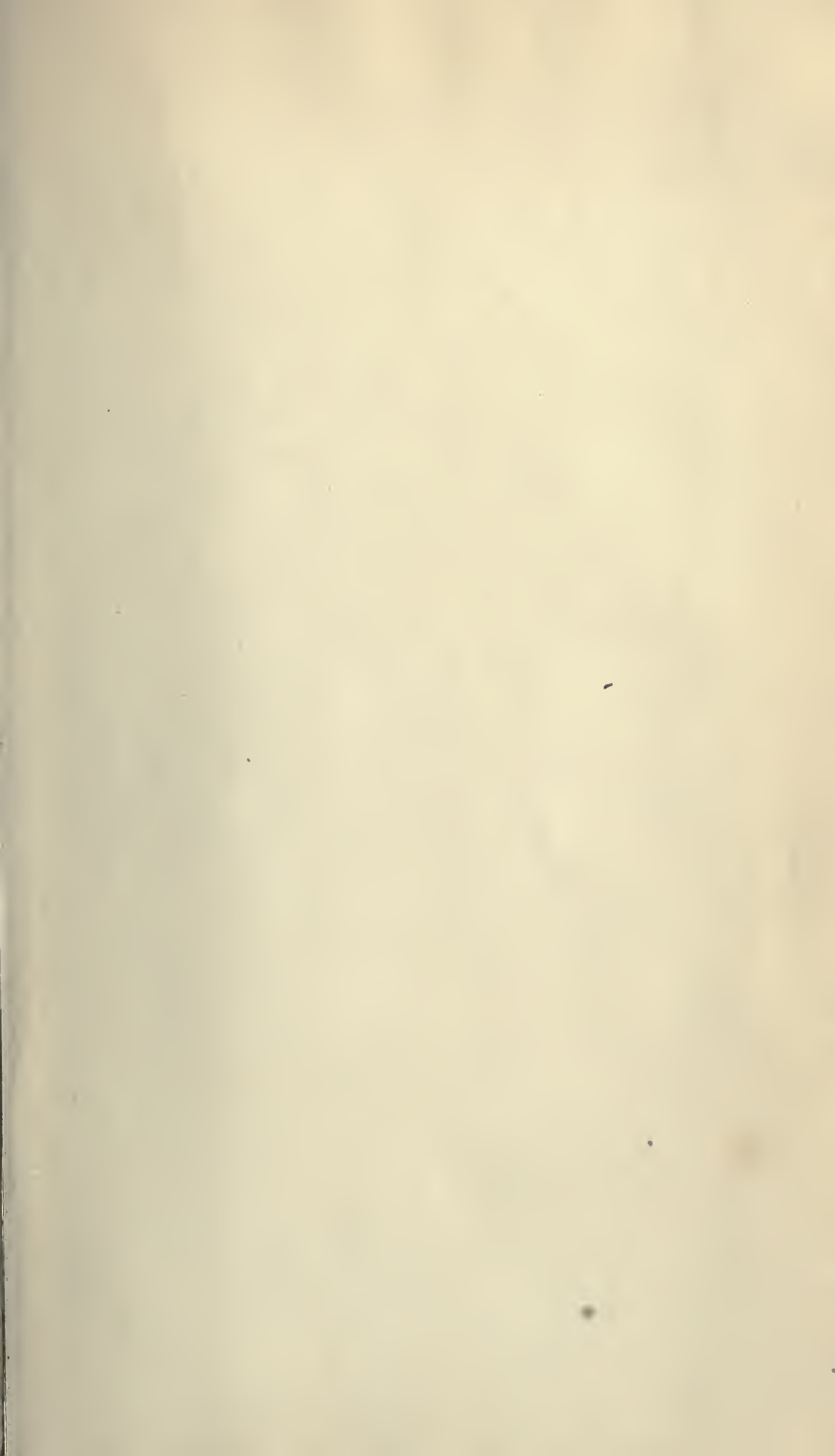
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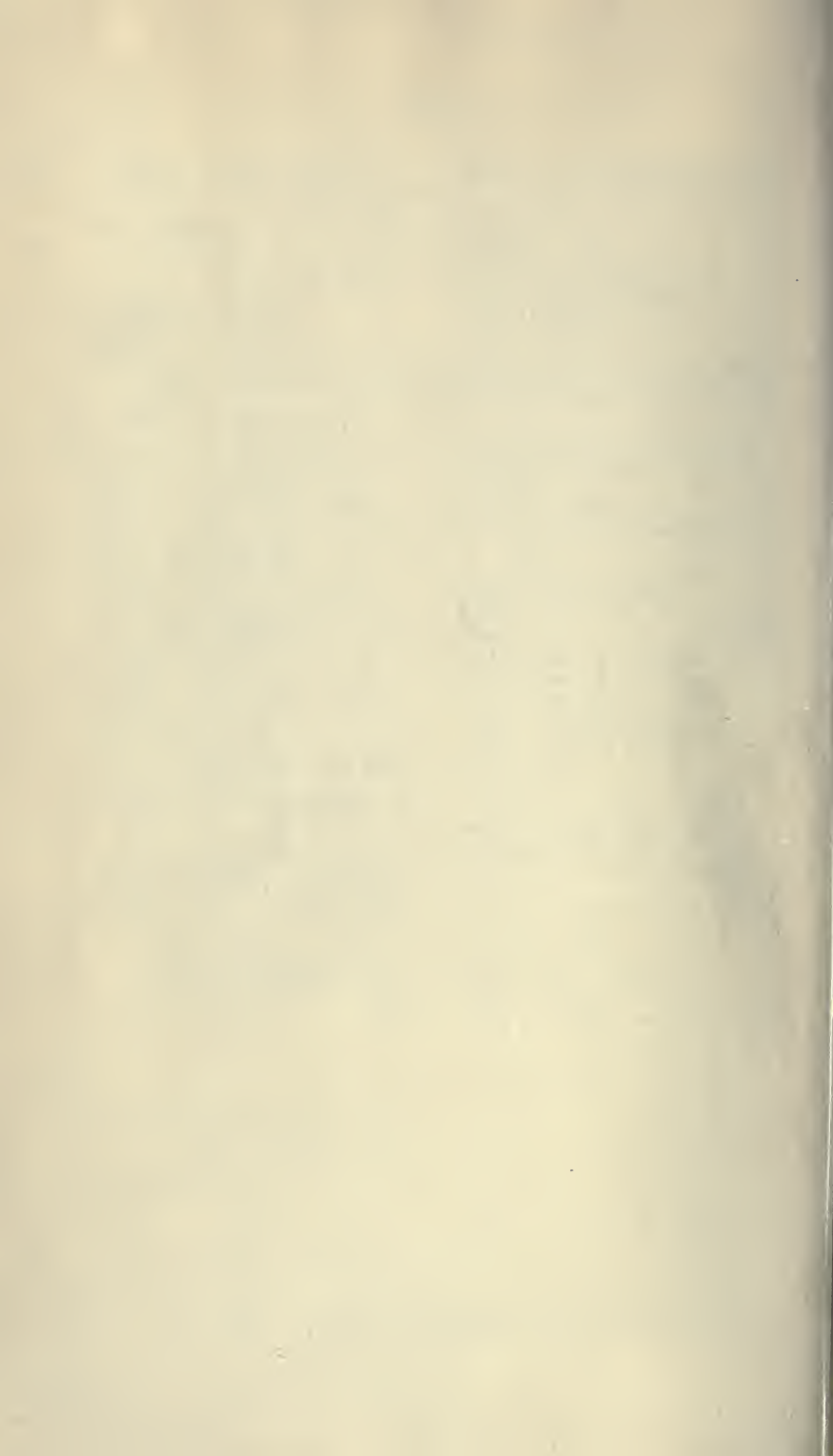
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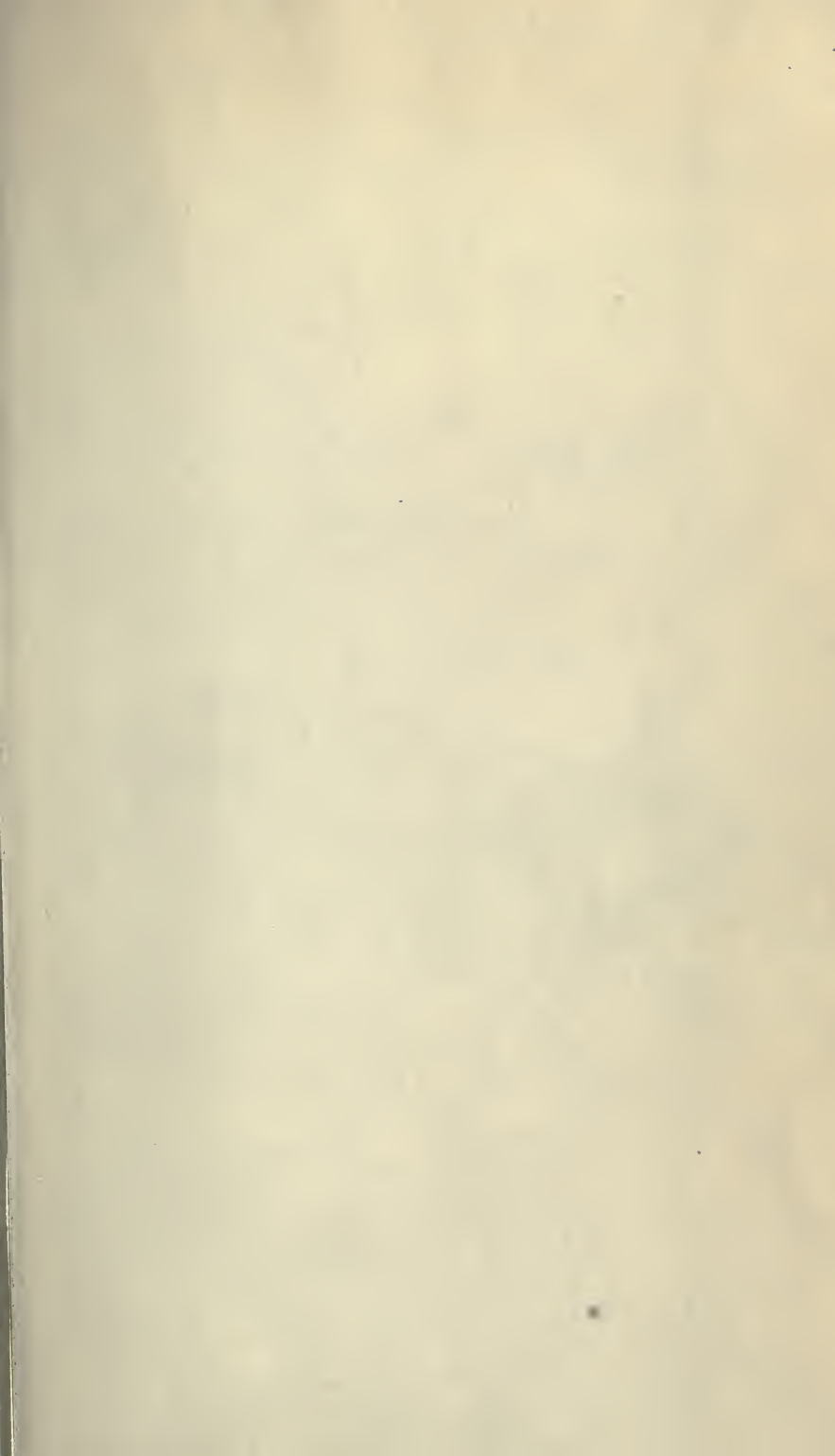
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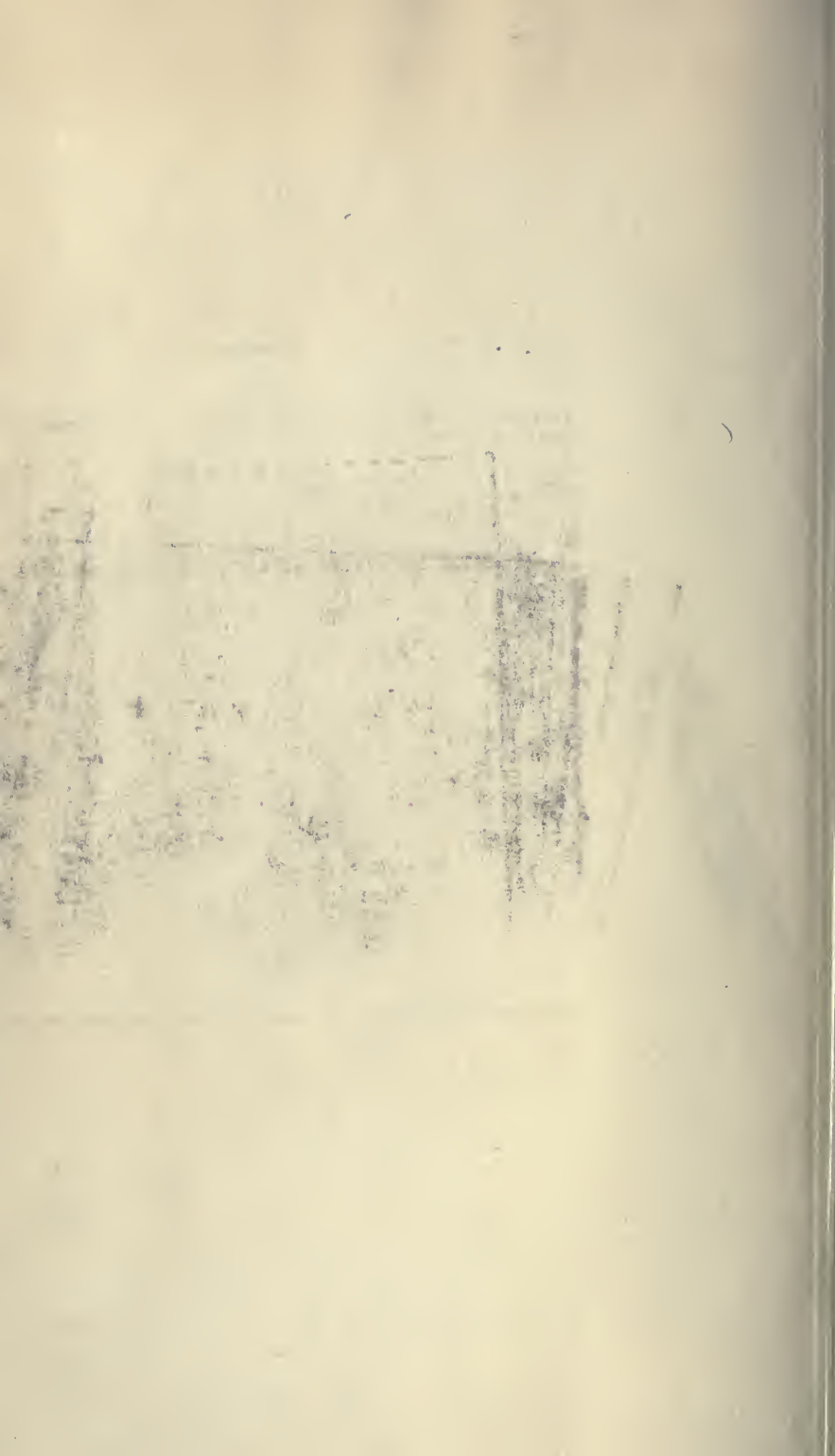












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